THE ORTHODOX WORD

CHRISTMAS, 1967
DOUBLE ISSUE

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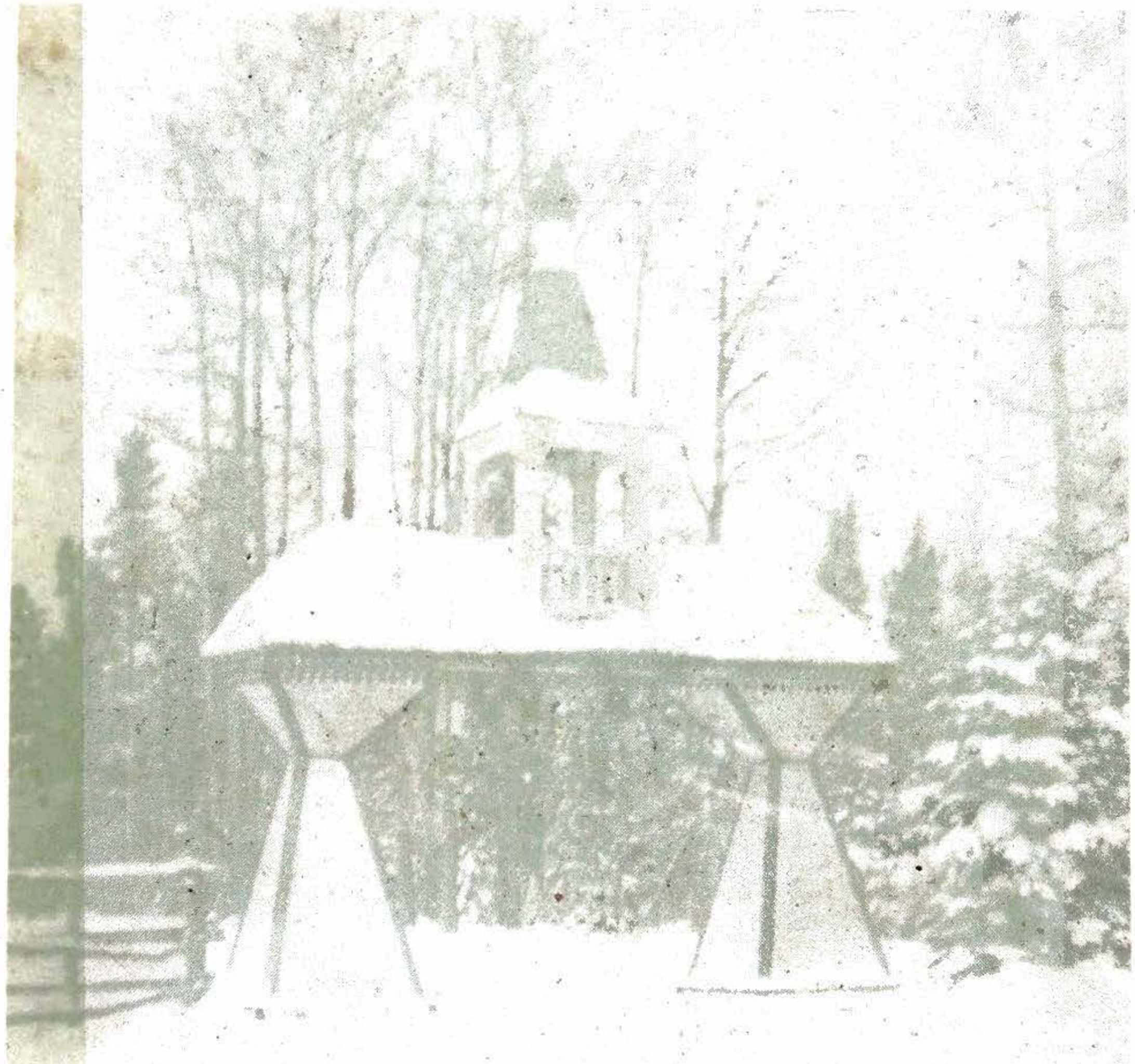
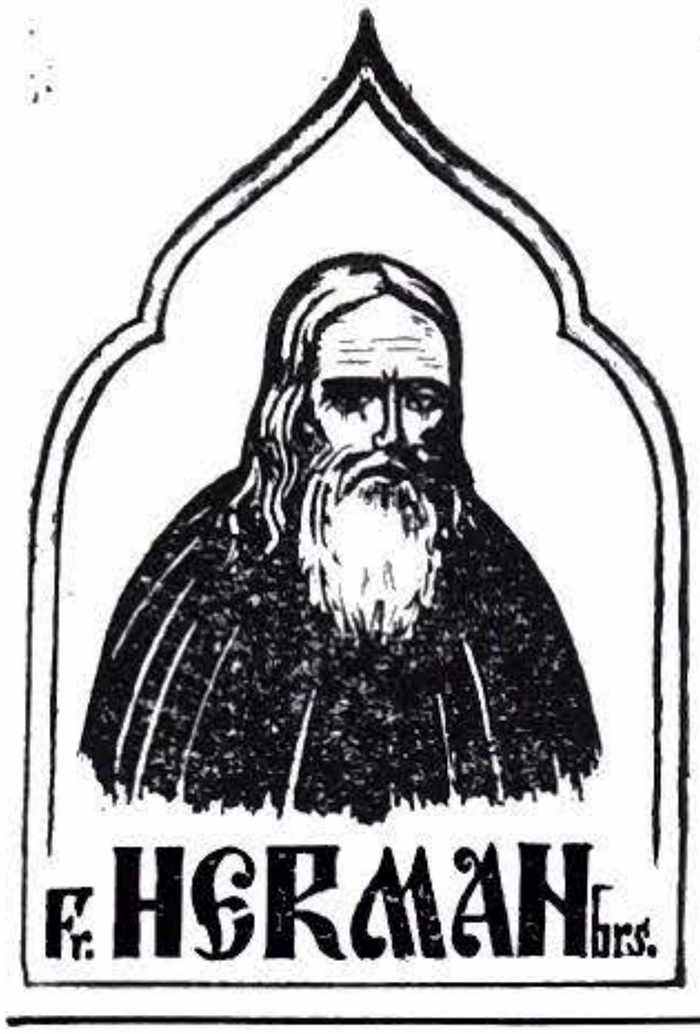


A PILGRIMAGE TO THE CANADIAN SKETES



THE ORTHODOX WORD

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October-November-December

Established with the blessing of His Eminence the late *John (Maximovitch)*, Archbishop of Western America and San Francisco, Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia

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TROPARION, TONE 4

THY NATIVITY, O Christ our God,
Rose upon the world as the light of knowledge;
For through it those who worshipped the stars
Were taught by a star
To adore Thee, the Sun of Righteousness,
And to know Thee, the Sunrise from on high.
O Lord, glory to Thee.

THE NATIVITY OF JESUS CHRIST

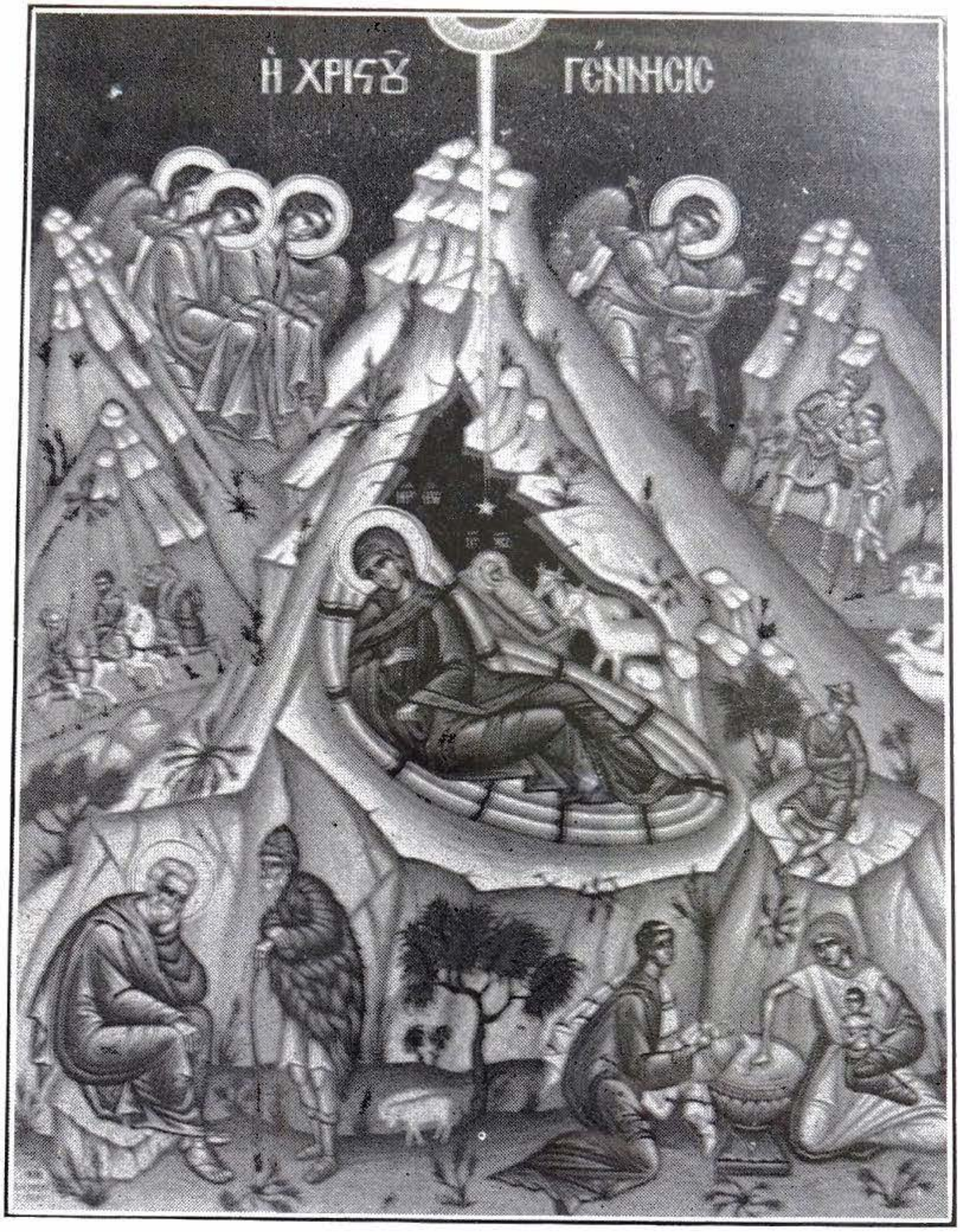
OUR LORD, GOD, AND SAVIOUR

By S. V. BULGAKOV[1]

THE ESTABLISHMENT of this feast belongs to the very earliest period of the Church. According to the generally-accepted opinion, the feast of the Nativity of Christ is more ancient in the West than in the East, but this must be understood only of the time of the feast's celebration: December 25. In the churches of the East until the 4th century it was celebrated on January 6 and was known by the name of *Theophany*. This feast had a particular character and was devoted not to commemoration of the Nativity or Baptism of Christ as such, but in general to the manifestation of God in the flesh, to the revelation in Christ and through Christ of Divine grace, which is why it received the name Theophany or, more precisely, *Epiphany* ("manifestation").

The original basis for celebrating the Nativity of Christ on January 6 was not the historical correspondence of this date with the birth of Christ, for this remained unknown even in antiquity, but rather a mystical understanding of a correlation between the first and the Second Adam, between the author of sin and death and the Master of life and salvation. The Second Adam (Christ), according to the mystical intuition of the ancient Church, was born and died on the same day on which the first Adam was born and died -- on the sixth day, which corresponded to the sixth of January, the first month of the year. Thus from the 4th century uniformity was established between the Eastern and Western Churches only concerning the time of celebrating the feast, namely December 25. In this sense the feast was first introductd into the Church of Constantinople about the year 377, by direction of the Emperor Arcadius following the custom of the Church of Rome and thanks to the energy and the power of eloquence of St. John Chrysostom; and from there it spread to the entire Orthodox East.

1. From the *Manual for Orthodox Priests* (*Nastolnaya Kniga*), Kharkov, 1900.



THE ICON OF THE NATIVITY

In the center is the cave in which, according to Orthodox tradition, the Saviour was born; the two animals fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah (1: 3): *The ox knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel does not know Me, and the people has not regarded Me.* Surrounding the cave, the whole of creation offers what it can in thanksgiving to the new-born Saviour: *Angels their song, the heavens a star, the magi gifts, the shepherds wonder, the earth a cave, the wilderness a manger, and we the Virgin Mother* (Stikhira of Vespers). At bottom two women wash the Child, and St. Joseph is tempted by the devil (in the guise of a shepherd) to doubt the Virgin Birth.

The very content of the feast already indicates the reason for its establishment, namely: the remembrance and glorification of the Nativity in the flesh by the Most Holy Virgin Mary of our Lord Jesus Christ. To this original and fundamental reason another was added very early: in order, through a precise establishment of the feast by revealing the true teaching of the Incarnation and Birth of the Saviour, to counteract the errors of certain heretics: Ebionites, Docetists, and Basilidians. Because of these false teachings the ancient Church chiefly emphasized, even on the feast of January 6, remembrance of the event of Christ's Birth as the revelation of God Himself in the flesh. In the 4th century, with the appearance and spread of Arianism, there appeared a new and more powerful stimulus for the Orthodox Church to glorify the event of Christ's Birth. Finally, by removing the feast to December 25, the Church had in view to counteract the pagan cult on that day and preserve the faithful from participating in it.

It is known that the Romans had on December 25 a feast, the so-called *dies natalis Solis invicti*, which served to express the idea of the sun's constant return to summer, as it were renewing itself, and which was a day of unbridled merrymaking among the people, a day of diversion for slaves, children, and the like. Thus in itself this day was better suited than any other for the commemoration of the Birth of Jesus Christ, Who is often called in the New Testament the Sun of justice, the Light of the world, the Salvation of men, the Vanquisher of life and death; and the reprehensible pagan celebration of it was sufficient motive for the Church to ennoble it in the sense of an elevated Christian commemoration. It was for this reason that already the ancient Church, denying the identity of the two analogous feasts -- the pagan and the Christian -- had already appropriated to the feast of the Nativity of Christ a character of energetic renunciation of pagan superstitions and customs. Affirming our faith in the great mystery of the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ and accusing all heretics who disfigured this dogma by their sophistry, the Holy Church, in celebrating the Nativity of Christ, represents this feast in its hymns as a day of universal joy, *for unto us is born this day a Saviour, Who is Christ the Lord* (St. Luke 2: 10-11). *Let Heaven and earth*, exclaims the Holy Church, *this day prophetically rejoice; every creature delights for the sake of the Lord our Saviour born in Bethlehem: for every idolatrous delusion has passed, and Christ reigns forever.*

THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

At the same time the Holy Church, by her celebration of the Nativity of Christ, instructs us morally in a holy life worthy of the Lord Who is born. *Today a Saviour has been born to us, Who is Christ the Lord, for us men and for our salvation*, and we, celebrating now this Birth of Christ the Lord, naturally must kindle in ourselves a determination to be reborn from a life of sin to a life holy and God-pleasing. Our Lord Jesus Christ has come down to earth and entered into a relationship of grace with us whom He *is not ashamed to call brethren* (Romans 2: 11). But in order for us to be worthy of this exalted communion and tie, in order not to reject the Lord come down from heaven, it is necessary for us to withdraw from the darkness of sin and draw near to the light of faith, piety, and good works.

Not in glory and magnificance, but in poverty, wretchedness, and humiliation does the Creator and Lord of heaven and earth appear in the world; not a luxurious palace, but a humble cave, receives the King of those who reign and the Lord of those who rule. By this we are shown the greatness of humility, poverty, meekness, and simplicity, and the ruinousness of pride, riches, vainglory, and luxury. The first deemed worthy to hear the Good News of the angels concerning the Birth of the Saviour of the world, and the first to bow before Him, were the simple shepherds of Bethlehem, and after them the wise Persian magi; and thus at the manger of the Saviour we see two kinds of people: pastors and magi, *i.e.*, the simplest people and the most cultivated.

By this it is suggested to us that the Lord receives all and everyone: He is pleased by unlettered simplicity, when it is united to faithful fulfillment of one's calling, to purity of conscience and life; and He does not reject human wisdom, when it knows how to submit itself to illumination from above and make use of its learning for the glory of God and the benefit of one's fellow men. This instructs each to be satisfied with his lot in life, and at the same time it shows that there is no calling or condition that prevents one from drawing near to God; that honest and industrious labor, conscientious fulfillment of obligations, inspired by faith and hope in God, are always pleasing to God and draw His blessing; that in the eyes of God it is not outward pre-eminence in the world that is precious, but simplicity of heart and conscience, meekness and humility of spirit, submissiveness and obedience to God's law, patience and good-heartedness, hope and devotion to the will of God, kindness and benevolence toward one's neighbor, a walking before God

irreproachably in all His commandments and statutes; that these precious qualities do not belong exclusively to any particular class of men; that in every calling and condition a man can be pleasing to God, if he will please Him in word and deed, in wish and thought. In general the manifestation of God in the flesh, so graphically depicted in the Church services of the feast, with all the accompanying circumstances, is an inexhaustible source for our edification.

The feast of the Nativity of Christ is celebrated for three days and is, with the exception of the Feast of Feasts, the radiant Resurrection of Christ, the greatest and most splendid of all the feasts of the Church of Christ. It is a "Pascha of three days" which St. John Chrysostom rightly calls "the mother of all the feasts."

On the same day is celebrated the memory of the three magi from the East, who learned of the Birth of the Saviour by a miraculous star and brought gifts and worshipped Him, and later (according to some accounts) received baptism from the Apostle Thomas in Parthia and themselves preached Christ. They, as Archbishop Innocent of Kherson has written, "represent the whole of mankind; and their gifts -- gold, frankincense, and myrrh -- symbolically represent all that we can offer to our Saviour. Gold represents material gifts and is offered by those who sacrifice something from their labor or acquisitions for the glory of God... Frankincense is offered by those who use, for the glory of God and the benefit of their neighbor, their talents, knowledge, and skill, which are something that cannot be bought with gold. These are God's gift to man, but they can and should be also man's gift to God... Myrrh, like frankincense, gives a fragrance, but its distinguishing characteristic lies in its extreme bitterness; therefore it represents our misfortunes, sorrows, tears, and suffering. They offer myrrh as a gift to the Lord who bear misfortunes in life and suffer innocently, without falling into despondency or complaining... This is the most precious of all the gifts that we can offer the Lord..."

Commemoration is made also on this day of the simple shepherds who were the first of the Chosen People to hear of the Birth of the awaited Messiah. The second day of the feast is dedicated to the glorification of Her through Whom the feast was made possible: the Most Holy Mother of God.

SAINT PHILARETOS
THE ALMSGIVER

This Life, translated from the Greek, is dedicated by the monks of Holy Transfiguration Monastery in Boston, with devotion and respect, to His Eminence METROPOLITAN PHILARET, *Chief Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, whose patron Saint Philaretos is. May those who read it remember in their prayers this servant of God in his difficult path of service to the Church of Christ.*

OUR FATHER AMONG THE SAINTS Philaretos lived during the years of the Emperor Constantine and the Empress Irene, in the eighth century. He was from the town of Amneia in Paphlagonia, which is under the Metropoly of Gangra. This blessed one was truly *phi laretos* -- "a lover of virtue" -- for he was godly and virtuous in his acts, as well as very wealthy in body and soul. He owned many beasts, twelve thousand sheep, six hundred cattle, horses, many fields, vineyards, and the like, as well as slaves and servants. He also had a God-fearing wife of noble lineage named Theosevo, a son named John, and two daughters -- Hypatia and Evanthia -- who were both very beautiful, more so than all the other women of that region. Moreover, Philaretos was very charitable, a friend of the poor and of strangers, and each day he would abundantly give of his wealth to those in want. He fed the hungry, clothed the naked, looked after widows and orphans, took in strangers, and, in brief, had compassion on all who were in need, giving them whatever they required. And he gave generously not only to those nearby, but to all, and he was recognized as being in truth another Abraham, by reason of his hospitality and the sympathy he had for his neighbor.

His fame in imitating the mercies of Christ was heard throughout the whole of Anatolia, and all the poor and needy would come and receive either money from him, or cattle, or whatever else they lacked. The house of Philaretos was an unfailing fountain for those who were parched with the thirst of poverty, and as much as he would give with a cheerful and virtue-loving countenance, by so much the more did the bountiful Lord multiply his possessions. But that hater of good, the cunning demon, had malice against the virtue of this man and sought power from God to tempt him, as he had once done also with the ever-to-be-remembered Job, saying thus: "It is not marvellous that out of the many things he has received this man should give alms to the poor, but let him also come unto poverty, and then I will know his true goodness." Therefore God granted the demon's wish that he might make Philaretos poor; for of himself the demon has no authority whatever to do evil to anyone. Because, according to the Scripture, "the Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich; He bringeth low, and lifteth up (I Kings 2:7)."

Since the Saint was giving alms according to his custom, and distributing his beasts and other possessions each day, when a part was stolen by thieves and robbers, and as a result of certain other misfortunes, he was reduced to utter poverty, and at last nothing remained to him except for a yoke of oxen, one ass, a cow with her calf, and some beehives. The farmers and neighbors brazenly seized his fields; for when they saw that he had become poor and was unable to till his lands, they took them -- some by force and others by entreaty -- and left him nothing but the house in which he lived. In all these things that he suffered he was not grieved, neither did he ever speak an improper word. But just as when a man suddenly becomes rich, he rejoices whole-heartedly, even so did Philaretos take pleasure in his poverty, bringing to mind the saying of Christ, "A rich man will hardly enter into the kingdom of God" (Matt. 19: 23).

One day Philaretos took his yoke of oxen and went to a field that he still had, and as he worked he thanked the Lord that he was able to earn his food by his own work with the sweat of his brow, according to the curse on our forefather Adam, and he entreated the Lord to give him patience to the end. Another poor farmer was there, and while he was working with his yoke of oxen in a nearby field, one of his oxen fell to the ground dead. At this he was exceedingly grieved, because he was very poor and much in debt. Therefore he went to Philaretos to tell of his misfortune, so that Philaretos might at least comfort him with a

ST. PHILARETOS THE ALMSGIVER

Commemorated December 1

Icon painted at the Russian Convent on the Mount of Olives by Sister Taisia and presented to Metropolitan Philaret in 1965.

good word, since, as the farmer knew, he could give him no help on account of his poverty. But that merciful and Christian man, when he saw his neighbor weeping, felt compassion for him; and immediately he unyoked one of his own oxen and freely gave it to him. The farmer marvelled at the good intent of the Saint, and said unto him: "My Lord, I know that you have no other ox; how then will you till your field?" But he answered: "I have another better one at home, so take it to do your work before my wife and children learn of it and become embittered." The farmer therefore took the ox, and went away glorifying God and blessing the Saint who had been so merciful to him.

The Saint took the yoke and plow on his shoulders and returned to his house with the single ox. When he was asked by his wife what had happened to the other ox, he said that he had fallen asleep a little at noonday, leaving it to graze, and it had gone off. But his son went out in search of it, and finding the farmer who had yoked it up, he was angry and said to him: "How did you dare, O man, to yoke another man's beast? Is it because we wretches are become poor that you despise us so much, and take our things by force?" But he replied: "My child, I beseech you, do not be angry with me without a cause, for your father has given it to me."

When the youth heard this, he departed griefstricken and announced it to his mother, who cast the covering from her head, and weeping spoke these things to her husband: "O heartless and idle, it were better that I had never known you. But though you feel no sorrow for me, at least have compassion on your children. How will they live? You are made of stone, a senseless lout; and you grew tired of working and gave your beast away not for the Lord's sake, but because you wanted to sleep." But the blessed Philaretos endured these reproaches with meekness and did not answer at all, so that he might not lose the reward of almsgiving. But he only told her: "Do not be grieved, my sister, because God is rich, and can repay us a hundredfold. He Who nourishes the birds of the heavens, will He leave us to hunger? Take no care for tomorrow, but hope on Him, that He may give you whatever you need, and eternal life."

After five days, again while the other ox of the farmer was grazing, it ate some kind of poisonous plant and died. Hence the farmer took the ox that Philaretos had given him and returned it to his house, saying, "Because of the sin which I committed, because I did injustice

to your children by taking your ox, God would not tolerate my lack of discretion, and brought death to the other one for me." But Philaretos gave him his remaining ox also, saying: "Take this one too, and go to work; because I have it in mind to move to a distant place, and do not need it." Taking the ox, therefore, the farmer went away home rejoicing, and marvelling at the liberality and generosity of the Saint, for he had been reduced to such poverty and yet again would not cease from giving alms. But at Philaretos' house his children began weeping with their mother, and said to one another: "Woe unto us that we know this man, this foolish old man who does not think of us at all. Because even though we are stricken with poverty, at least we had the yoke of oxen as a comfort, that we wretches might not perish from hunger." But the holy old man consoled them, saying: "Do not grieve; I have hidden away money in a certain place, so much that if you lived a hundred years without working, it would be enough for you to feed and clothe yourselves, for I foresaw this poverty that was to come upon us, and I used to sell some of the animals and would keep the money." He told them these things with assurance, because he foresaw as a prophet, by the grace of the All-Holy Spirit, what was about to happen, even as it came to pass.

In those days there came an Imperial decree that the soldiers should go to war against the Hagarenes. One soldier, Mousoulios by name was utterly destitute, and had nothing but his horse and a spear; and it happened, where all were running in the haste of military manoeuvres, that this poor soldier's horse was kicked and afterwards died. The soldier was therefore in great distress, for he had no money to buy another horse; and he went to the holy Philaretos and besought him to lend him his until the manoeuvres were over, so that his commander should not maltreat him. When the Saint heard of his distress he gave it to him freely, saying to him: "Take it in place of yours, and keep it as long as it lives; and may God keep you unharmed." Mousoulios therefore took it, and departed glorifying the Lord.

And there came a certain other poor man to the Saint and asked him for a calf so that he could start up a herd, because the Saint's gifts brought good, and to whomever he gave alms, there his gift would multiply, and the recipient would become enriched. Philaretos immediately separated the calf from its mother and gave it to him, but the cow missed her young one and bellowed. Then his wife said to him, "You have no pity on us, you merciless creature, but do you not at least feel

or the cow, seeing that you have parted her from her young one?" And he answered, "May you be blessed by God, wife, for you have spoken justly, and it is not right that I should separate them." Saying these things, he called the poor man to whom he had given the calf, and said to him, "My wife has told me that I committed a sin in separating these two. Therefore, take the calf's mother also, and may God bless them in your house, and multiply them just as He also once multiplied my herd." And so it came to pass, and the poor man acquired so many head of cattle from that blessing that he became rich. But the Saint's wife reproached herself, saying, "Justly have I suffered this; for if I had not spoken, the cow would have remained in our house."

In that year there was a famine in that region. Not having anything with which to feed his wife and children, Philaretos took the ass and went to another place, to a certain acquaintance of his, and borrowed six bushels of wheat. When he had reached his own house again, and was unloading it, a poor man came up to him and asked him for a little. He told his wife to give the man a bushel. But she said to him: "First you give a share of one bushel to each of us, then give the rest to whomever you choose." But Philaretos said: "And do I not get a share?" She said to him: "You are an angel, and do not eat; because if you had need of bread, you would not have given the wheat away which you borrowed and carried for so many miles." Then the blessed Philaretos rebuked her, saying: "May God forgive you." Then he measured out two bushels and gave them to the poor man. And she said to him: "Give him half of the load, so you can share it." Immediately, then, Philaretos measured out the third bushel also and gave it to him. Since the poor man had no bag to put it in, Theosevo said mockingly to her husband: "Why don't you give him the bag too, to put it in?" And the Saint gave the bag to him. And again she said to him: "Just to spite me, give him all the wheat." And he gave it to him. But the poor man, not being able to lift the six bushels of wheat all at once, said to the new Job: "Let it remain here, my Lord, until I transfer it to my house." And Theosevo said to her husband: "Give him the ass too, so the man won't go to so much trouble." The Saint blessed her, and loading up all the wheat gave it to the poor man together with the beast, and he departed rejoicing. And Philaretos said: "A poor man has no worries. Naked came I forth from my mother's womb, and naked shall I depart."

Then his wife and her children wept, for they were hungry; and having nothing to eat, she borrowed a loaf of bread from a neighbor

and boiled some weeds, and they ate. But Philaretos went to another neighbor's and supped there, thanking God. Then a great ruler, one of Philaretos' friends, the governor of the city, hearing about the destitution of his once-munificent friend, sent him forty bushels of wheat. When the Saint saw it, he thanked God, Who takes thought for His servants. His wife, however, divided it up, and each one took five bushels. The Saint took his share and distributed it to the poor until the third day, when he had no more left. But when his wife was eating together with the others, he also would go and they would give him something, grumbling and saying to him: "How long are you going to keep that treasure hidden? Why don't you bring it out so that you can buy and eat, instead of coming and taking back what you have given us?" Nothing else was left to him, except for the beehives. And whenever a poor man came to him, since he had nothing else to give him, he would take him to one of the beehives and feed him honey; and this he would do every day, until at last there remained only one basket, which his children would secretly go and gather. Finally, when another poor man came, the Saint took him to the beehives, and finding no honey there at all, he took off his garment and gave it to the man, so as not to send him away empty-handed. When he was asked by his children about it, he said that he had mislaid it, and not bearing to see him in this state, his wife cut up one of her dresses for him and made it into a man's tunic, and he wore that.

At that time there reigned the Christ-loving Irene and Constantine, her son, who sent soldiers to every city and region to find a beautiful and virtuous daughter for the Emperor to wed. Travelling, therefore, to all cities and lands, they came to Amneia also; and when the men of the court saw that the house of Philaretos was beautiful and large, they surmised that he was some great prince, and ordered the servants to go and make things ready for them to remain there that night. And the God-loving Philaretos took his staff and met them with great joy, blessing and thanking them because they deigned to spend the night in his poor and humble house. Afterwards he ordered his wife to prepare a meal with great care, so that they could offer them hospitality. But she said: "You haven't left a hen in this house, you wretch, and what are we going to give them for hospitality? Or am I supposed to cook with weeds?" The Saint said: "Light the fire, garnish the big banqueting-hall, and polish the ivory table; and God will now send us all the food we want."

So his wife then made everything ready, and behold! the foremost people of the region brought in from the servants' entrance mutton, young lamb, fowl and squabs, fine old wine, and whatever else was necessary, and Theosevo cooked them artfully with herbs and spices; and they got the table ready up in the great banqueting-hall. Now this table was a most beautiful thing, round, and so large that 36 men could sit at it. When the men of the court saw such great splendor, and that the food which was brought in for them was worthy of great princes, and that the old man was reverend and venerable (for he was like Abraham in all things, not only in hospitality, but also in appearance), they were pleased beyond measure, and while they were eating, John came in, the old man's son, resembling his father in appearance and stature, as manly as Samson and as handsome as Joseph. The rest of the grandchildren also entered, carrying food to the table; and the soldiers marvelled at their beauty, manners, and behavior, and said to the old man: "Do you have a wife?" And he said: "Yea, my lords; and these children are my children and grandchildren." And they said to him: "Let your wife also come in to bless us." When she came, and they saw that she was so fair, even though she was an old woman, they marvelled at her beauty and comeliness, and asked her if she had daughters, and she said: "My first daughter has two young girls." And they said: "Let them come so that we may see them according to the command of our most divine Rulers." But the old man said: "Let us eat what God has provided for us to rejoice with; and since your honorable selves are tired from the journey, rest, and tomorrow may the will of God be done."

The next day the girls apparelled themselves, and they came out, presenting themselves properly and bowing to the soldiers in admirable fashion. When the soldiers saw their beauty, their apparel, the way they carried themselves, their propriety, and their other admirable qualities, they were ecstatic and most full of joy, and when they measured them, they found the first to be just what they were searching for in height and equally correct in the measurement of her foot, according to the Emperor's command; and she was also similar to the picture which they carried. Then they took them all with great joy -- the old man Philaretos; his wife Theosevo; his first son John; his first daughter Hypatia, a widow with two daughters, Maria and Maranthia; and all his relatives, thirty souls in all -- and departed for the Palace. They also chose another ten girls from other places.

When they arrived in Constantinople, they first brought the beautiful bnt vain daughter of a certain rich man, Gerontianos, to Stavra-

kios, the Emperor's tutor and administrator of the Palace, who on seeing her said, "She is fair and beautiful, but she is not suitable for the Emperor." He then gave her many gifts and sent her back home. When they had also brought the others, and the Emperor, his mother, and Stavrakios saw the exceeding beauty of the grandchildren of Philaretos, they marvelled at the way they bore themselves and their good breeding. Immediately the Emperor was espoused to the first, Maria; and the second was espoused to a certain great prince who was a patrician in rank. And the daughter of Evanthia, the other daughter of the Saint, they sent to Argouses, the King of the Langobards, who had asked at that time that they send him a maiden from Constantinople to take as his wife. The weddings, then, were celebrated joyfully. And the Emperor called all of the relations of Philaretos and gave them all, from the greatest to the least, many lands to oversee, much riches, possessions, clothing, gold, precious stones, pearls, and large houses to live in close to the Palace. Then all of them remembered the prophecy of the old man, who had told them that he had much hidden wealth, and they called him blessed, and blessed him because his good intent had brought them to such happiness. As for the venerable and holy old man who had received so many gifts from the Emperor, he did not forget the gifts of God, neither did he abandon his former custom, but gave thanks with both words and deeds, ever and always.

One day he told his wife and relatives: "Let us also give a rich banquet, and invite the Emperor and all the princes." When they had adorned and prepared all as he commanded them, and had made the place fragrant with perfumes to receive the Emperor, the blessed one went out in the morning into the streets and by-ways of the city, and all the lepers, the maimed, and the old men that he found -- two hundred in number -- he took to his house, and said to his relatives: "The Emperor is coming with all his friends." They then made a great commotion and much preparation to welcome such exalted persons. While they were thus making ready, they saw the poor men entering, and all those who were strong enough sat at the table, and the rest sat on the floor. Afterwards the host also sat down with them. His relatives said to one another secretly: "Truly the old man has not abandoned his former habits, but at least now we are not afraid of becoming poor." The old man then ordered his son John, whom the Emperor had made First Sword-Bearer, to serve at the table; similarly his grandchildren also stood by attentively.

When they had cleared the table, the blessed Philaretos said these things to his relatives: "Behold, what I promised you the merciful God has given to us; now do I owe you anything more?" Then they remembered the words of the holy old man, and they wept, saying, "Truly, you foreknew all these things, being a just man, and you gave alms most wisely. But we, like ignorant fools, saddened your holiness. But forgive us, because we have erred before God and before you." Saying these things, they fell at his feet. But he raised them up, saying, "Behold, my Lord has given us what He promised with His holy mouth in the sacred Gospel, that is, that He would give a hundredfold to those who love Him and give alms to the poor. And if you would inherit life everlasting, let each one of you give up ten silver pieces, that we might give them to our invited brethren." They did his bidding with all eagerness, and having received his blessing, the poor men departed, thanking the Lord and blessing their benefactors. After this, on a certain day, he said again to those of his household: "If you want to buy up my part of the things that the Emperor has given me, let each of you give me the price of whatever it is he wishes to have; but if you do not wish to do this, then I bestow them on my poor brethren, and it will be enough for me merely to be called father of the Emperor." And they gave the price of each and every thing, and the amount came to sixty pounds of silver and gold. When the Emperor and the nobles heard of these things, they praised his generous disposition and his sympathy for the poor.

The blessed Philaretos also had the custom of never giving only one siver piece, or one *pholla*. Instead, he used to fill up three purses which were similar in appearance and equal in size. In one he would put gold bezants, in another silver pieces, and in the other copper pieces; and they would be carried by one of his slaves, whom he had for this purpose. Then, when a poor man would come to beg, he would tell his slave to bring one of the purses, whichever one the Providence of God would ordain, since He knew the need of those who approached him. The Saint would mentally pray to God to enlighten him, that he might give to each one according to his need; and thus he would put his hand into whichever purse was brought to him, and would give as much as was God's will. And he would say this also with assurance: "Many times I would see a person who wore good clothing, and I put my hand out to give him a few coins, and without my wanting it my hand would take many; and again I would see another man with old clothing, and I would put out my hand to take many coins, and it would bring out only a few." Thus he would give alms according as God would dispense.

ST. PHILARETOS THE ALMSGIVER

While living in the Palace, the righteous Philaretos never wished to wear a silken garment or a golden belt, nor did he ever desire to receive any Imperial rank. Only after much entreaty on the part of the Emperor and Empress was he forced to accept the rank of Consul, and he would say, "It is enough for me that they call me the grandfather of the Empress, I who was a poor man of the soil and a pauper of dung." So humble was he that he did not want anyone to call him by any other name but his first name, Philaretos of Amneia, that is, the name of his poor country. But when the Lord revealed to him the end of his life, he took that servant who kept his purses of almsgiving, and going secretly to one of the city's convents which was called "The Judgement," where there were nuns, he entreated the Abbess to give him a newly-dug grave. And the Saint told her, "After ten days I shall depart from this life and go to another Kingdom, and I want to bury my miserable body in this tomb." He ordered his servant not to reveal the matter to anyone. After he had gone home, he fell into bed ill.

On the ninth day of his illness, he called all his relatives and said to them: "My children, the Emperor has called me and I go to Him today." They, thinking that he was speaking of his son-in-law, said to him: "How can you go, Father, since you are weakened from illness?" But he answered: "They who wish to carry me away with a golden throne stand here at my right hand with much glory, but you do not see them." Then they understood his words aud made great lamentation, as once the children of Jacob had done. But the Saint motioned with his hand for them to keep silent, and admonishing them he said: "You know my way of life very well, my most beloved children -- how I gave alms from my own labor, and not from cheating and robbery. You remember the riches I had at first, and the poverty which came to me from God, and again you see this final wealth which the Lord has sent me. Have you ever perchance seen me proud when I was in good fortune, or grumbling in my poverty, or committing injustice against any man? Therefore do you also likewise, if you desire your salvation. Do not grieve over corruptible riches, but give all things to the poor. Send it to me in that world, so that you will find it there when you come. Do not leave it here so that others may rejoice over it, and you suffer torments eternally, but distribute it to the widows and orphans, to the prisoners and the poor, even as you saw me do also; so that the abundantly-giving King may reward you, and that you may rejoice in His heavenly Kingdom forever.

After the blessed one had blessed his wife and all his relatives, his countenance shone like the sun, and he chanted with joy, "*Mercy and judgement shall I sing unto Thee, O Lord.*" And after he had finished the whole Psalm, so much fragrance poured forth throughout the whole house, that it was as though someone had spilled precious myrrh, and had burned incenses of many perfumes. Then again he said the Symbol of the Faith, that is, the "I believe in One God," and the "Our Father." And while he was saying "Thy will be done," he gave up his holy soul into the hands of God, being by now an old man and full of days; and neither his teeth nor the color of his countenance had been altered by old age, but he was ruddy and handsome.

Then the Emperor and all the Senate came, and all his relatives, and they buried his venerable relics in the grave which he himself had prepared. On that day also they gave many alms to the poor, who all followed the holy relics and cried out with tears to God, saying: "Why, O Lord, hast Thou deprived us of our provider and benefactor? Who will clothe our naked bodies? Who will pay our debts? Who else will ever be found to have so much compassion towards us, the abject?" Thus they all lamented, and one of them who had had a demon from his birth, who would often go while the Saint was living and would receive alms from him, and was also following the relics, cried out in an unruly manner and clutched at the bier to overturn it. When they reached the grave, the demon cast the man to the ground and shook him, and then it left him, and the man was made well through the intercessions of St. Philaretos. They that were present glorified God, Who had given so much grace to his slave. Then they buried him in the sepulchre which he had purchased at the Convent of the Judgement, hymning the Lord.

This was the way of life that was led by the Christ-imitating and compassion-loving Philaretos, who was well-pleasing to God, and was glorified by Him in this world, and in the future world was deemed worthy of eternal blessedness. Therefore let us also be diligent, brethren, to imitate him, each according to his strength. Let us protect the poor and strangers, let us look after the imprisoned, let us care for the sick, let us tend to the churches, and in short let us also do all the things this Saint did, so that we also may pass our time here in peace and concord and in all manner of good. And if again temptation should come unto us, let us hope in the Lord without doubting, and He will surely reward us a hundredfold, and we shall inherit life everlasting, in Christ Jesus our Lord, to Whom be glory and dominion unto the ages. Amen.

THE KAZAN MOTHER OF GOD

By VADIM WRIGHT

ONE OF THE MOST VENERABLE of the Russian miracle-working icons is that of the Kazan Mother of God, named, as are most icons, after the town or village where it first appeared and produced the first miracles.

Today, as Christian morality and the witness of Orthodox Christianity rapidly diminish over the face of the earth, and to lead a true Christian life becomes ever more difficult, we need all the more to be reminded of the closeness of God, which is manifested so strikingly in the phenomenon of wonderworking icons, that our faith may be strengthened. And God, seeing the waves of unbelief that rush against a believer today, has power to bestow great mercy upon those who love Him, just as He has done in the past, especially in connection with the origin or revelation of various wonderworking icons.

A true revelation of a wonderworking icon always bears a providential significance. This is quite clear in the case of the Kazan Icon, for: (1) it was revealed to the people of Kazan to strengthen their faith immediately after a terrible fire which had tried their faith; (2) it vividly demonstrated the glory of Orthodox Christianity and the mercy of God to Russia's new subjects, the Moslem Tatars and pagan nomads; (3) it prompted great devotion to Orthodoxy in the loyal sons of Russia so that they might withstand the Roman Catholic assault upon Holy Russia in 1612. An active part in the events accompanying the revelation of the Kazan Icon was taken by the glorious Patriarch Germogen, who was to defend Orthodoxy unto martyrdom. He is the author of the Church Service to the Wonderworking Kazan Icon, and he composed the touching troparion that follows.

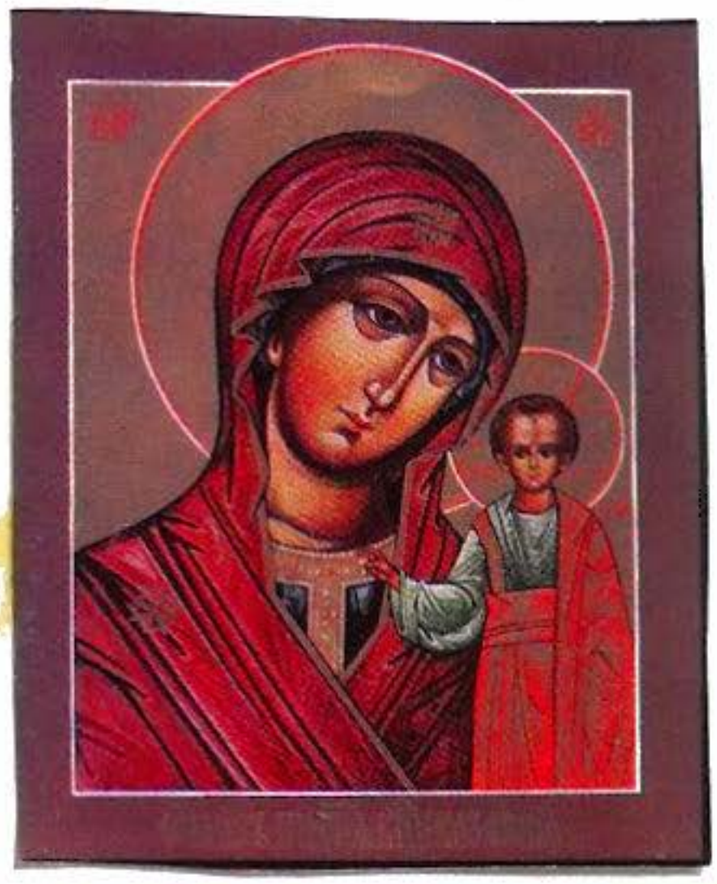
Troparion, Tone 4

Ardent Intercessor, Mother of the Lord on High! Thou prayest to Thy Son, Christ our God, for all and savest those who have recourse to Thy powerful protection. Defend us, O Lady, Queen and Holder of Sovereign Power when we, burdened with many sins, stand before Thee in misfortune, sorrow, and sickness, praying to Thee with tender sensitivity of soul and contrite heart, shedding tears before this, Thy Most Pure Image, and having steadfast hope in Thee Who deliverest from all evils. Grant to us what is profitable for our souls and save all, Virgin Mother of God, for Thou art the Divine Protection of Thy servants.

*

THE HISTORY OF THE KAZAN ICON begins with the introduction of the Orthodox Faith to the part of Russia known as Kazan, an area then occupied by the Tatars. In the time of Tsar Ivan IV (known as *the Terrible* to the Tatars) it was God's will to bring Christian enlightenment to this region. The Tsar's armies marched on Kazan and took the surrounding lands in 1552. On the day following the capture of Kazan the Tsar immediately began the construction of a church in the name of the Mother of God in this new Russian territory. The first archpastor of Kazan, sent the next year, was Archbishop Gury, a saint, as was his successor, St. Herman.

Orthodox enlightenment was successfully disseminated in Kazan by Archbishop Gury and his assistant, St. Barsonophy; the latter, later to become bishop of Tver, knew the language and customs of the Tatars and was also a skillful physician. The Christian example manifested in the holy lives of these two great men was a chief factor in the spread of Orthodoxy in the Kazan region. However, there was a constant and strong opposition on the part of the Moslem natives. For this reason, as well as to strengthen the faith of Orthodox believers, it was the will of the Most Holy Mother of God to reveal one of Her Icons.



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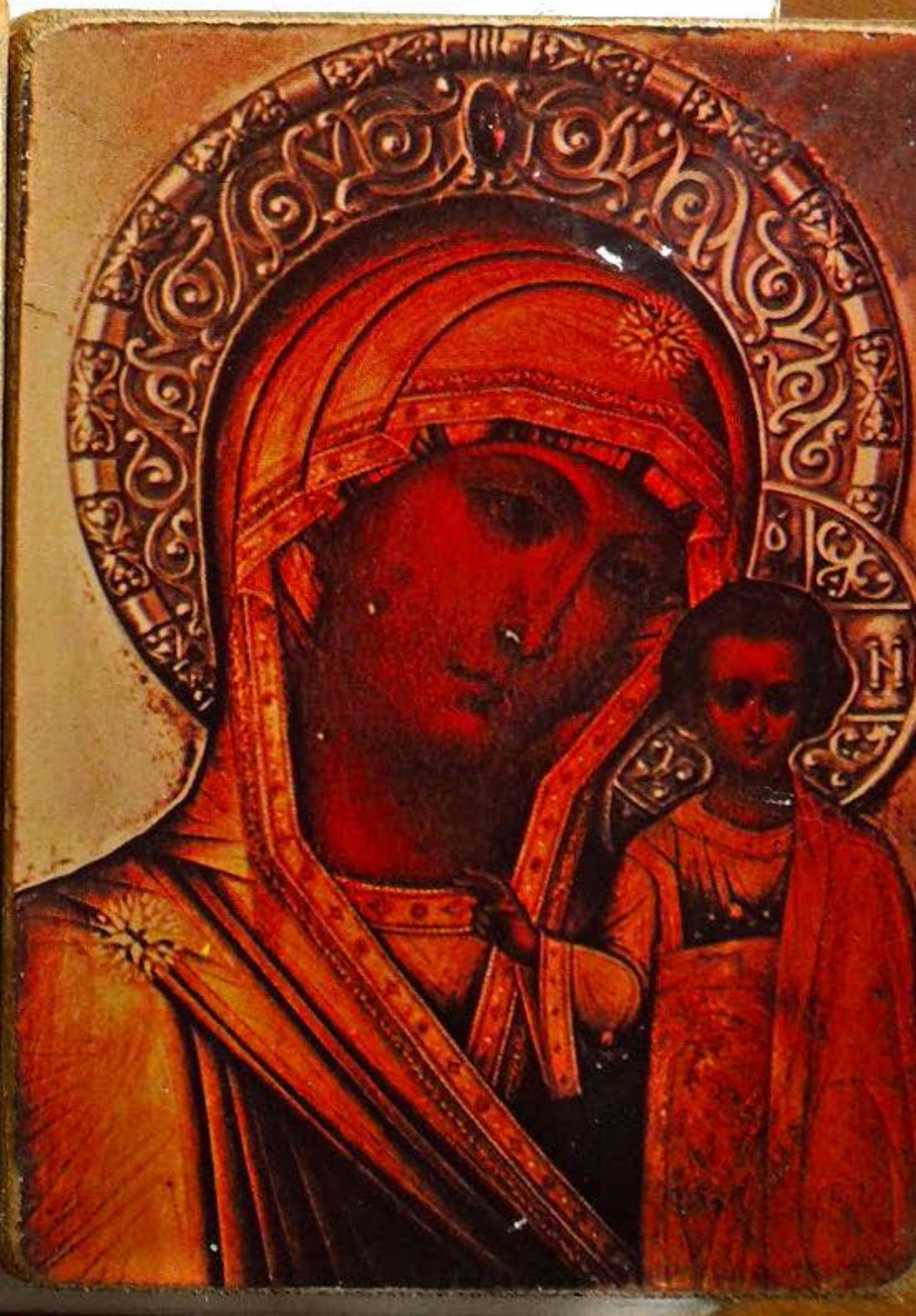

In the year 1579, shortly after a great fire had destroyed more than half of the Kazan Kremlin, the Moslems tried to discourage the Orthodox faithful by saying that the Christian God had had no mercy for the Kremlin and its inhabitants. It was at just this time that God was truly to show His great and wondrous mercy for His people.

In one of the many families made homeless by the fire there was a nine-year-old girl, Matrona. To her the Mother of God appeared in a dream, telling her to reveal to the Archbishop the exact place where a holy Icon was buried. Rising from her bed, Matrona ran to her mother and told her what had occurred, but she was ignored and sent back to sleep. Twice more the same dream was repeated and finally her mother believed her and took her to see the archbishop. He and his clergy heard Matrona's story of the buried Icon, but refused to go in search of it.

On this very day, the 8th of July, 1579, while Matrona and her mother were weeping in desperation over what to do about revealing the Icon, a bright light suddenly appeared in their home, not far from where the Icon was supposed to be buried. And in this light there appeared the holy Icon itself, clean and shining as if freshly painted. Matrona and her mother rushed to tell the archbishop and the whole town. The archbishop returned to Matrona's home and, having witnessed the miracle, served a moleben and triumphantly carried the Icon to the church of St. Nicholas, where at that time was serving the future Patriarch of Moscow, Germogen. On the way to the church the first miracle occurred from the holy Icon: a blind man named Joseph regained his sight. At the church itself a short time later another blind man, Nikita by name, was healed. From these first two miracles it was revealed that the Kazan Mother of God was truly a miracle-working Icon.

Soon after this an exact copy of the Kazan Icon was sent to the Tsar in Moscow. The Tsar then decreed that a convent be erected in Kazan to shelter the Icon. The first two nuns to take monastic vows at the new convent were Matrona and her mother. Soon the number of nuns rose to 64. The erection of the convent was completed in 1594; in 1808 a new cathedral was finished, replacing the 200-year-old original church. At the convent the holy Icon was adorned many times with priceless jewels and metal covers (rizas).

The Kazan Mother of God has played a decisive part in the history of the Orthodox Russian people. Russian armies have been aided and cities saved by the mercy of the Mother of God in response to prayer

before Her holy Icon. One of the greatest miracles from the Icon occurred in 1612, when the Poles devastated Moscow and caused its people great misery. The bishop of Kazan sent the holy Icon to the Tsar to help drive the invaders from the capital, and St. Sergy of Radonezh appeared to a Greek bishop in Russia and revealed that if Moscow were to be saved the people must pray to and rely upon the Most Holy Mother of God. When word spread of this appearance of St. Sergy, the people began fervently to pray. The Kazan Mother of God was placed at the head of the Russian troops, and Moscow was thus freed and peace restored to the Russian people. This liberation of Moscow and all Russia, on October 22, 1612, is commemorated to this day as one of the two feasts of the Icon. The Kazan Mother of God also aided in the repelling of the Napoleonic invasion: before the decisive battle of Borodino in 1812, General Kutuzov visited and prayed before the Petersburg copy of the Icon and took Her blessing with him into battle; later he was buried in the Petersburg cathedral where this Icon is located.

There are a great number of wonderworking copies of the Kazan Icon, many of them quite old; Poselyanin's standard work on the icons of the Mother of God gives brief accounts of 56 of the best-known copies in Imperial Russia, concluding with the icon in St. Michael's Cathedral in Sitka, Alaska. In our own time of revolution and diaspora She continues to be the "Guide" (*Hodigitria*, as this type of icon of the Mother of God is called in Greek) of Orthodox believers, sending speedy help to troubled souls.

The original Icon, however, to the sorrow of all Orthodox people, has been lost. In the night of June 29, 1904, impious thieves broke into the Kazan Cathedral and stole, among other holy objects, the Kazan Icon. The thieves were later found and punished, but the Icon itself was not found. The icon now in America that has been widely advertised as the original is apparently only another of the later copies; Orthodox hierarchs who knew the Kazan Icon have seen this icon and affirm that it is definitely not the original.

THE WEEPING KAZAN ICONS

One of the most touching miracles of the Most Holy Mother of God, one which usually precedes some general calamity allowed by God because of men's sins, is that of Her Weeping Icons. At least three

Kazan icons are recorded to have emitted tears, at the same time granting miraculous healings to believers. Two of them, those of Kaplunovka and Tambov, have already been presented in English on the list of Weeping Icons in *The Orthodox Word*, vol. 1, no. 6. All the meager information available about the third one is presented below as an addition to this list. (Information from E. Poselyanin, *The Mother of God*, St. Petersburg, n.d.)

11. The Kazan Icon of Kargopol. This icon originally belonged to a widow, Martha W. Ponomareva, in the town of Kargopol in Central Russia. On February 14, 1724, tears began to flow ftom the right eye of the Mother of God. The widow reported this to a priest of the church of the Exaltation of the Cross, and he, after coming to her home and inspecting the icon, carried it to the church. That same day the miraculous emission of tears was repeated in the church. On the 29th of the same month, tears began to flow from both eyes in the sight of many people of the town. Then miracles began to occur after prayer before this miraculous icon. The present whereabouts of the icon is not known.

HEALING
OF PARALYSIS

1936

THE EARTH FROM FATHER HERMAN'S grave is considered to have healing properties. Here is what one resident of Karluki village related to me last summer.

In 1936 a married couple, Peter and Yuliana Naumov, then living in Chief Point on the western part of Kodiak Island, had a fourth child born to them. The Naumov family lived absolutely alone in Chief Point and looked after the nearby lighthouse. There was no doctor, no obstetric nurse, not even a midwife present at the birth, and the husband happened to be out repairing the lighthouses.

She was in long and difficult labor, and as a result her whole right side was paralyzed from head to foot; she had been in perfect health up to that time.

The husband returned, and seeing the pathetic condition of his wife and four small children, fell into despair. There was no telephone or telegraph there; a mail ship came there just once a month bringing the necessities of life; and it was only when driven ashore by bad weather that a rare fishing boat put in. A doctor was necessary, but where would one go with an absolutely motionless wife and four little children in the harsh Alaskan wintertime. One couldn't leave the wife and children alone for a long time either, since the trip to the nearest settlement would take more than twenty four-hours. Peter was torn between

the children and the sick wife, not knowing what to do or where to begin. Gradually, however, he gained control of himself and started trying all kinds of home remedies; but alas, they did not do any good, and only increased the poor woman's misery. The husband finally came to the point where he was going to put his wife and children in a boat and take them to a doctor in Kodiak, but the sick woman protested. They finally decided to try the last remedy that was once used by the Aleuts: to rub the paralyzed part of the body in order to cause an increased circulation of blood; but the sick woman, it turned out, did not react at all to the stimulus -- the paralysis was complete. Peter sought every sort of help in vain, and finally he turned to God.

While praying he remembered the story of the Aleut Egor Kaliglyou (who died fifteen years ago) -- how paralysis had struck him and deprived him of the use of his left arm, but how with mud consisting of earth from the grave of Blessed Herman mixed with holy water Egor had rubbed his afflicted arm and been healed.

When he had finished praying Peter, enlightened, turned to his wife and ecstatically cried out: "Herman, Herman." His wife by signs indicated the icon-case, where some earth from the grave of Blessed Herman was kept. Peter stirred the earth into some holy water and offered his wife as much as she could drink (it should be said here that for two days she had not been able to swallow at all). "I had to make an effort to pour the drink into her mouth, and I don't know whether she drank any or not," said Peter. Right after this he stirred in some more earth, explained again to his wife what this was, and began to rub her paralyzed body. "How long I rubbed, or which prayers I said, I do not remember... But Father, you see Yulia yourself, -- and that is my whole story. Others may think what they like, but from that time on in our icon-case we have had, together with the other icons, a portrait of Blessed Herman..."

Silence followed, as each of us prayed mentally to Blessed Herman... Before me sat a healthy woman of thirty-eight, in the prime of life. I looked attentively at her and then at the image of Blessed Herman -- his black monastic cloak, his bent hands holding his prayer-beads, and I forgot that I had come to have dinner with Peter; I had come to behold the Divine world...

THE ORTHODOX WORD

I remember this story now while standing at the grave of Blessed Herman, and I bend down and take some earth for myself...

On the way back I once again stopped in at the church, and then at the chapel. My companions have left the chapel-cell of Blessed Herman (on the site of which, in a little log cabin, Father Herman met his righteous death), to reinvigorate their physical powers, but I once more begin to contemplate and to kiss the relics of Blessed Herman.

Archpriest Alexander Popov
Kodiak, Alaska, May, 1951

HELP IN CHILD-BIRTH

EMELIAN PETELO RELATES how a certain woman who had lived in the village of Ouzinkie always had difficulty in childbirth. She had had three children, and none of them had lived. She was again with child, and she had come to the island (to the Monk's Lagoon on Spruce Island), believing that she would obtain help through the prayers of Father Herman.

She came to the spring, and with a prayer to Father Herman she drank all she wanted of water from it. She went back to the village by foot (it was about nine miles from the hermitage to Ouzinkie), on the narrow footpath which was all the swampy and almost impassable island afforded; and on the very night she returned to Ouzinkie, she gave birth. She was successfully delivered, and without any particular difficulty, of a child who survived to maturity.

Archimandrite Gerasim Schmaltz
31 Oct. (13 Nov.), 1962

Иромонахъ Серафимъ

ST. SERAPHIM OF SAROV

1759 - 1833

From the portrait made five years before his death by Serebrennikoff, with facsimile of the Saint's signature

THE SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTIONS

TO LAYMEN AND MONKS

Of Our Father Among the Saints

ST. SERAPHIM OF SAROV

THE SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTIONS of the great Saint of Sarov Monastery are here presented for the first time in the English language, as translated from L. Denisov's *Life* (Moscow, 1904). This important work will appear, God willing, in its entirety (43 sections, following the order of the original edition) in consecutive issues of *The Orthodox Word*.

In 1837 the first biography of St. Seraphim was compiled by Hieromonk Sergy of St. Sergy's Holy Trinity Lavra near Moscow, whose abbot at that time was a spiritual son of the Saint, Archimandrite Anthony. The *Instructions* were a supplement to this *Life*, being the teaching of St. Seraphim as compiled from conversations with him; the Saint himself put nothing of his teaching into writing. Fr. Anthony took an active part in the compilation of this book, and he subsequently presented it for approval to Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, who had great reverence for the Saint.

Having thoroughly examined the manuscript, Metrop. Philaret returned it to Fr. Anthony and in an accompanying letter wrote: *I am returning to you the exhortations or* Spiritual Instructions *of Father Seraphim, which I have examined. I have allowed myself the liberty of changing or completing certain expressions, partly to improve the language, partly so that the thought, at times incomplete and unusually expressed, would not give rise to misinterpretation or controversy. Examine these and let me know if I have changed or harmed anything in the thoughts of the Starets.*

Thanks to the personal intercession in the reluctant Synod of this outstanding hierarch, the book was published and veneration of St. Seraphim took the right course, the Saint (canonized in 1903) becoming a major inspiration to Orthodox Russians for a century and more thereafter. May the publication of these *Instructions* in English now inspire Orthodox Americans as well!

I

GOD

GOD IS A FIRE that warms and kindles the heart and inward parts. And so, if we feel in our hearts coldness, which is from the devil, -- for the devil is cold -- then let us call upon the Lord, and He will come and warm our hearts with perfect love not only for Him, but for our neighbor as well. And from the presence of warmth the coldness of the hater of good will be driven away.

The Fathers wrote, when they were asked: Seek the Lord, but do not be curious as to His dwelling place.

Where God is, there is no evil. Everything that comes from God brings peace and profit and leads a man to humility and self-condemnation.

God shows us His love for mankind not only when we do good, but also when we offend and displease Him. How patiently He endures our transgressions; and when He chastises, how mercifully He chastises!

Do not call God just, says St. Isaac; for His justice is not evident in your deeds. If David called Him just and righteous, His Son, on the other hand, showed us that He is rather good and merciful. Where is His justice? We were sinners, and Christ died for us. (St. Isaac the Syrian, Homily 90.)

A man becomes perfect in the sight of God to the extent that he follows in His footsteps; in the true age God will reveal His face to him. For the righteous, to the degree that they enter into contemplation of Him, behold His image as in a mirror; but there they will behold the revelation of Truth.

If you do not know God, it is impossible for love of Him to be awakened in you; and you cannot love God if you do not see Him. The vision of God comes from knowledge of Him; for contemplation of Him does not precede knowledge of Him.

One should not think about the doings of God when one's stomach is full; on a full stomach there can be no vision of the Divine mysteries.

II

THE MYSTERY OF THE HOLY TRINITY

IN ORDER to look upon the Most Holy Trinity one must ask the aid of those who taught about the Trinity -- St. Basil the Great, St. Gregory the Theologian, and St. John Chrysostom -- whose intercession is able to draw upon men the blessing of the Most Holy Trinity. But one should be warned not to attempt to look directly for oneself.

III

THE REASONS WHY JESUS CHRIST CAME INTO THE WORLD

THE REASONS WHY Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came into the world are these:

1. The love of God for the human race: *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son* (St. John 3:16).

2. The restoration in fallen humanity of the image and likeness of God, as the holy Church celebrates it (first canon of the Matins for the Nativity of Christ, Song 1): *Man who, being made in the image of God, had become corrupt through sin, and was full of vileness, and had fallen away from the better life Divine, doth the wise Creator restore anew.*

3. The salvation of men's souls: *For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved* (St. John 3:17).

And so we, in conformance with the purposes of our Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ, should spend our life in accordance with this Divine teaching, so that through it we may obtain the salvation of our souls.

IV

FAITH

BEFORE ANYTHING ELSE one must believe in God, *that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him* (Hebrews 11:6).

Faith, according to the teaching of St. Antioch, is the beginning of our union with God. One who truly believes is a stone in the temple

of God; he is prepared for the ediface of God the Father, raised to the heights by the power of Jesus Christ, that is, of the Cross, with the aid of ropes, that is, the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Faith without works is dead (James 2:26), and the works of faith are: love, peace, long-suffering, mercy, humility, rest from all works (as God Himself rested from His works), bearing of the cross, and life in the Spirit. Only such faith can be considered true. True faith cannot be without works; one who truly believes will unfailingly have works as well.

V

HOPE

ALL WHO HAVE FIRM HOPE in God are raised up to Him and enlightened by the radiance of the eternal Light.

If a man has no care whatever for himself because of love for God and virtuous deeds, knowing that God will take care of him, -- such hope is true and wise. But if a man takes care for his own affairs and turns with prayer to God only when unavoidable misfortunes overtake him and he sees no way of averting them by his own power, only then beginning to hope in God's aid, -- such hope is vain and false. True hope seeks the Kingdom of God alone and is convinced that everything earthly that is necessary for this transitory life will unfailingly be given.

The heart cannot have peace until it acquires this hope. It gives peace to the heart and brings joy into it. Concerning this hope the most venerable and holy lips of the Saviour have said: *Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest* (St. Matthew 11:28); that is, have hope in Me, and you will have relief from labor and fear.

In the Gospel of St. Luke it is said of Simeon: *And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ* (St. Luke 2:26). And he did not kill his hope, but awaited the desired Saviour of the world and, joyfully taking Him into his arms, said: Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart into Thy Kingdom, which I have desired, for I have obtained my hope -- Christ the Lord.

VI

LOVE OF GOD

HE WHO HAS attained perfect love exists in this life as if he did not exist. For he considers himself a stranger to the visible, patiently awaiting the invisible. He has been completely changed into love of God and has forgotten every other love.

He who loves himself cannot love God. But he who, for love of God, does not love himself, loves God.

He who truly loves God considers himself a pilgrim and a stranger on this earth; for in his yearning toward God with soul and mind, he contemplates Him alone.

The soul that is filled with love of God, at the time of its departure from the body, does not fear the prince of the air, but takes flight with the angels as if from a foreign country to its native land.

VI

THE FEAR OF GOD

A MAN WHO HAS TAKEN upon himself to travel the path of internal mindfulness must have above all the fear of God, which is the beginning of wisdom.

Upon his mind there must always be engraved these words of the prophet: *Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling* (Psalm 2: 11).

He should travel this path with the utmost care and with reverence for everything holy, and not negligently.

Otherwise, he must take heed lest there should apply to him the Divine decree: *Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord negligently* (Jeremiah 48: 10).

Reverent carefulness is necessary here because this sea -- that is, the heart, with its thoughts and desires, which one must cleanse by means of mindfulness is -- great and vast, *and there are numberless reptiles there* (Psalm 103: 25), that is, numerous vain, unjust, and impure thoughts generated by evil spirits.

SHOULD THE CHURCH BE "IN STEP WITH THE TIMES?"

By ARCHBISHOP AVERKY

In a time when under the name of Christianity, even Orthodox Christianity, every kind of compromise and surrogate is offered men whose spiritual hunger can be satisfied only by uncompromising Truth, the spiritual shepherds have become few who speak straightforwardly the saving word. Archbishop Averky, Abbot of Holy Trinity Monastery at Jordanville, New York, and a leading hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, is one of these few. In the pages of the Russian religious newspaper published by the Monastery, Orthodox Russia, *his voice is continually heard, calling for faithfulness to Holy Orthodoxy and warning of the impending judgement of God on this evil generation.*[1]

"Know that we must serve, not the times, but God."
ST. ATHANASIUS THE GREAT,
Letter to Dracontius

IN STEP WITH THE TIMES! -- Behold the watchword of all those who in our time so intensely strive to lead the Church of Christ away from Christ, to lead Orthodoxy away from true confession of the Orthodox Christian Faith. Perhaps this watchword does not always nor with everyone resound so loudly, clearly, and openly -- this, after all, might push some away! -- The important thing is the practical following of this watchword in life, the striving in one way or another, in greater or lesser degree and measure, to put it into practice.

Against this fashionable, "modern" watchword, perilous to souls, however it may be proclaimed or however put into practice, openly or under cover, we cannot but fight -- we who are faithful sons and representatives of the Russian Church Abroad, the whole essence of whose ideology, in the name of which it exists in the world, is *not* to be "in step with the times," but *to preserve an unchanging faithfulness* to Christ the Saviour, to the true Orthodox Christian Faith and Church.

1. The present article is from *Orthodox Russia*, Nov. 28, 1966.

Let us recall how the Blessed Metropolitan Anthony, founder and first head of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, in his remarkable essay, "How does the Orthodox Faith differ from the Western Confessions?" wrote concerning the profound difference between our Faith and heterodoxy. He finds this profound difference in the fact that the Orthodox Faith teaches *how to construct life according to the demands of Christian perfection*, whereas heterodoxy takes from Christianity only those things which are, and to the degree to which they are, *compatible with the conditions of contemporary cultural life*. "Orthodoxy looks upon Christianity as the eternal foundation of true life and demands of everyone to force himself and life until they attain this standard; whereas heterodoxy looks upon the foundations of contemporary cultural life as an unshakable fact. Orthodoxy demands *moral heroism -- podvig*; heterodoxy searches for what in Christianity would be useful to us in our present conditions of life. For Orthodox man, called to eternity beyond the grave, where true life begins, the historically-formed mechanism of contemporary life is an insubstantial phantom; whereas for the heterodox the teaching concerning the future life is a lofty, ennobling idea, an idea which helps one ever better to construct real life here."

These are golden words, indicating for us clearly and sharply the truly bottomless abyss that separates genuine Christian faith -- Orthodoxy -- from its mutilation -- heterodoxy! In the one is to be found ascetic labor (*podvig*), a turning to eternity; in the other, a strong attachment to the earth, a faith in the progress of mankind on earth.

Further, as Metropolitan Anthony so sharply and justly sets forth, "the Orthodox Faith is an *ascetic* faith," and "the blessed state which the worshippers of the 'superstition of progress' (to use the felicitous expression of S. A. Rachinsky) expect on earth, was promised by the Saviour in the *future* life; but neither the Latins nor the Protestants desire to reconcile themselves to this, for the simple reason -- to speak frankly -- that they poorly believe in the resurrection and strongly believe in happiness in the present life, which, on the contrary, the Apostles call *a vapor that shall vanish away* (James 4:14). This is why the pseudo-Christian West does not wish and is unable to understand the renunciation of this life by Christianity, which enjoins us to fight, *having put off the old man with his deeds, and having put on the new man, that is renewed unto knowledge after the image of Him that created him* (Col. 3:9-10).

"If we investigate all the errors of the West," Vladika Anthony writes further, "both those which have entered into its doctrinal teaching

and those present in its morals, we shall see that they are all rooted in a failure to understand Christianity as ascetic labor (*podvig*) involving the gradual self-perfection of man."

"Christianity is an ascetic religion," concludes this excellent, forcefully and perspicuously-written essay. "Christianity is a teaching of constant battling with the passions, of the means and conditions for the gradual assimilation of virtues. These conditions are both internal -- ascetic labors -- and given from without -- our dogmatic beliefs and grace-bestowing sacramental actions, which have one purpose: to heal human sinfulness and raise us to perfection."

And what do we see now in contemporary "Orthodoxy" -- the "Orthodoxy" that has entered into the so-called "Ecumenical Movement"? We see the complete negation of the above-cited holy truths; in other words: *renunciation of true Orthodoxy* in the interest of spiritual fusion with the heterodox West. The "Orthodoxy" that has placed itself on the path of "Ecumenism" thinks not of raising contemporary life, which is constantly declining with regard to religion and morals, to the level of the Gospel commandments and the demands of the Church, but rather of "*adapting*" *the Church herself to the level of this declining life.*

This path of actual renunciation of the very essence of Holy Orthodoxy -- ascetic labor, for the purpose of uprooting the passions and implanting the virtues -- was taken in their time by the partisans of the so-called "Living Church" or "Renovated Church". This movement immediately spread from Russia, which had been cast down into the dust by the ferocious atheists, to other Orthodox countries as well. Still fresh in our memory is the "Pan-Orthodox Congress" convened by Ecumenical Patriarch Meletios IV of sorry memory in 1923, at which were devised such "reforms" as a married episcopate, remarriage of priests, the abolition of monasticism and the fasts, abbreviation of Divine services, suppression of special dress for clergy, *etc.*

Notwithstanding the collapse at that time of these impious designs, the dark powers were not, of course, pacified, and continued from that time their obstinant and perseverant activity, finding for themselves obedient tools in the ranks of the hierarchy of various Local Orthodox Churches. At the present time also, by the allowance of God, they have attained great success: *almost all the Local Orthodox Churches have already entered into the "Ecumenical Movement,"* which has set as its purpose the abolition of all presently-existing churches -- including, of course, the

Orthodox Church – and the establishment of some kind of absolutely new "church," which will be completely "in step with the times," having cast away as useless rags, as something "obsolete" and "behind the times," all the genuine foundations of true Christianity, and first of all, of course, *asceticism*, this being the indispensable condition for the main purpose of Christianity: the uprooting of sinful passions and the implanting of Christian virtues.

We have before us, as an example, an official document of this sort, belonging to the Local Church of Serbia: the journal *Theology*, published by the Orthodox Theological Faculty in Belgrade (8th year, issues 1 and 2 for 1964). In this journal we find a lead article literally entitled: "The Necessity for the Codification and Publication of a New Collection of Canons of the Orthodox Church." The author of this article, while cunningly affirming that "the ideal principles of the Church will remain everywhere and always unchanging," nonetheless attempts to prove that the collection of canons of the Orthodox Church is only the product of a time long since passed into eternity, and therefore that it does not answer to the demands of contemporary life and must be abolished and replaced by another. This new collection of canons, observe, "must be brought into agreement with the fundamental principles of life," with which the Church supposedly "has always reckoned." "Our time," says this cunning author, "is different in many respects from the time of the Ecumenical Councils, at which these canons were composed, and therefore these canons cannot now be applied."

Let us look now and see precisely which canons it is that this modernist author considers obsolete and subject to abrogation:

--- The 9th canon of the Holy Apostles, which demands that the faithful, after entering church, should remain at the Divine service to the end, and should not cause disorder by walking about the church.

--- The 80th canon of the Council of Trullo, which punishes clergy by deposition, and laymen with excommunication, for failure to attend church for three successive Sundays without some important reason.

--- The 24th canon of the Council of Trullo, which prohibits clergy and monks from visiting race tracks and other entertainments; to

this canon the author adds the entirely naive, strange remark that it was only in earlier times that such amusements were places of depravity and vice, while now they are supposedly "centers of culture and education."(?!)

--- The 54th canon of the Holy Apostles, which prohibits clergy, without unavoidable necessity, from entering a tavern; here again it somehow seems that previously the tavern was some different kind of establishment from what it is now.

--- The 77th canon of the Council of Trullo and the 30th canon of the Council of Laodicea, which prohibit Christian men from bathing together with women; why it is necessary to acknowledge these canons too as "obsolete" is completely incomprehensible!

--- The 96th canon of the Council of Trullo, which condemns artificial curling of the hair and in general all adornment of oneself with various kinds of finery "for the enticement of unstable souls" -- instead of "adorning oneself with virtues and with good and pure morals"; this canon in our times, it would seem, has not only not become "obsolete," it has become especially imperative, if we call to mind the indecent, shameless women's fashions of today, which are completely unsuitable for Christian women.

This is sufficient for us to see *what* purpose it is that the aforementioned "reform" in our Orthodox Church has in view, with what aim there is proposed the convocation of an Eighth Ecumenical Council, about which all "modernists" so dream, already having a foretaste of the "carefree life" that will then be openly permitted and *legitimized* for all!

But let us reflect more deeply upon what is the terrible essence of all these demands for the abrogation of supposedly "obsolete" canonical rules. It is this: these contemporary church "reformers" who now so impudently raise their heads even in the bosom of our Orthodox Church itself (and terrible to say, their number includes not merely clergy, but even eminent hierarchs!) accept contemporary life with all its monstrous, immoral manifestations as an unshakable fact (which is, as we have seen above, not at all an Orthodox, but a heterodox, Western conception!), and they wish to abrogate all those canonical rules which precisely characterize Orthodoxy as an *ascetic* faith that calls to ascetic labor, in the name of the uprooting of sinful passions and the implanting of Christian virtues. This is a terrible movement, perilous for our Faith and Church; it wishes to cause, in the expression of Christ the Saviour, *the salt to lose*

its savor; it is a movement directed toward the overthrow and annihilation of the true Church of Christ by means of the cunning substitution for it of a *false church.*

The above-mentioned article in the Serbian theological journal is still discreet, refraining from complete openness. It speaks of the permissibility in principle of marriage for bishops, but in life we hear ever more frequent and persistent talk of far worse -- namely, of the supposed inapplicability in our times of all those canonical rules which demand of candidates to the priesthood and of priests themselves a pure and unblemished moral life; or, to speak more simply, of the *permissibility* for them of that terrifying depravity into the abyss of which contemporary mankind more and more plunges itself.

It is one thing to sin and repent, knowing and acknowledging that one is sinning and is in need of repentance and correction of life. It is something else again *to legitimize lawlessness, to sanction sin,* lulling thus one's conscience and thus abolishing the very foundations of the Church. To this we have no right, and it is a most grievous crime before God, the Holy Church, and the souls of the faithful who seek eternal salvation.

And for how long, to what limits may we permit ourselves to go on such a slippery path, abrogating the Church canons which uphold Christian morality? Right now in America and, as we hear, in places also in other countries which have accepted contemporary "culture," there is increasing propaganda for the official abrogation of marriage and the legalization in place of marriage of "free love"; the use of contraceptive pills is being sanctioned for married couples, and even for the unmarried, since marriage supposedly has as its purpose not the procreation of children, but "love"; legal recognition is being prepared for the heinous, unnatural passion of homosexuality, all the way to the establishment for homosexuals of a special church wedding rite (proposal of an Anglican bishop); *etc., etc.*

And so? Should our Church too follow this fashionable path -- "in step with the times," so as not to be left behind the march of life? But what kind of "church" will this be that will allow itself all this, or even merely look at it with all-forgiving condescension? It will be no longer a church at all, but a veritable Sodom and Gomorrah, which will not escape, sooner or later, the terrible chastisement of God.

We must not allow ourselves to be deluded and deceived, for we do not need such a "church," or rather "false church." We may ourselves be weak, and feeble, and we may often sin, but we will not allow the Church canons to be abrogated, for then it will become necessary to acknowledge the very Gospel of Christ, by which contemporary men do not wish to live, as "obsolete," as "not answering to the spirit of the times," and *abrogate it!*

But the Gospel of Christ, together with all the canons of the Church, as well as the Church ordinances, outline for us that Christian ideal toward which we must strive if we desire for ourselves eternal salvation. We cannot allow a lowering of this ideal for the gratification of sinful passions and desires, a blasphemous abuse of these holy things.

Whatever "reforms" all these contemporary criminal "reformers" may desire, the truly-believing Orthodox Church consciousness cannot acknowledge or accept them. And whatever the apostates from true Orthodoxy, from the ascetic Faith, may do, *we will not allow the modernization of our Church*, and *we will NOT go "in step with the times"!*

GREAT ORTHODOX HIERARCHS
OF THE 19TH & 20TH CENTURIES

METROPOLITAN PHILARET OF MOSCOW

1782 - 1867

By ELENA KONTZEVICH

His Historical Significance

PHILARET LEFT behind himself the grand wonder of his personality, and he stands a solitary figure, not to be compared with any other, in the Russian hierarchy of his time, itself resplendent with mighty and talented men... From its first sacred centuries the Church has scarcely known that there could be such an example of the harmonious blending of diverse gifts. Mind and heart; thought, feeling, and will: one does not know at what in him to be the most astonished. The fire of St. Chrysostom, the soaring of St. Gregory, the profundity and vision of mysteries of St. Basil. His contemporaries looked upon him as upon a miracle, although they saw, so to speak, only the separate parts of this superb and glorious temple of the Spirit of God. But to us: the farther he retreats from us into the depths of time, the more brightly he steps out before us in all the fullness of his perfections, in everything, in all the abundance of the talents active in him .." And if a Christian government will be restored in Russia, one may hope that Metropolitan Philaret will be canonized and added to the ranks of the Fathers of the Church. (E. Sumarokov, "Lectures on the History of the Russian Church," Harbin, 1945, vol. 2.)

THE BLESSED METROPOLITAN
PHILARET OF MOSCOW
1782 - 1867

METROPOLITAN PHILARET OF MOSCOW

Metropolitan Philaret was born scarcely half a century after the death of Peter I. Still fresh were the abolition of the patriarchate, which left the Church without a head, the recent establishment of a Synod in the Protestant manner, the breaking-up of the Orthodox way of life, and the establishment of seminaries according to a Catholic model. It was an uneasy, unstable period of transition. A new Moses was needed to lead out the people of God upon the true path, to strengthen true Orthodox foundations and not give them over to be mutilated, as could happen under the new conditions. And in truth, All-merciful God sent a spiritual leader to answer to the need of the Church at this critical time.

Much has been written about Metropolitan Philaret. It is not possible to embrace his whole significance in a magazine article. We can only attempt, in commemoration of the hundredth anniversary of his death, to give the reader a brief idea of this great, as yet uncanonized, hierarch.

Almost a contemporary of Metropolitan Philaret was another Russian genius who attained sanctity, Archimandrite Paissy Velichkovsky (1722-1794). As a student at the Kiev Academy he did not hold up under the instruction in Latin, when mythology was taught instead of the Holy Fathers, and where there was little room for Orthodoxy. Orthodoxy was opened up to the children of Orthodox clergy only through the church service books and through home life. Fr. Paissy could not reconcile himself to the existing situation. He gave up study, hid at first in Russian monasteries and then went to Mt. Athos. There he collected the writings of the holy Orthodox ascetics, with great effort translated them into Slavonic, and at the end of his life sent many manuscripts to Metropolitan Gabriel of Petersburg, who published them in 1794 under the name of *Dobrotolybie*. The students of Fr. Paissy were scattered throughout the vastness of Russia, establishing a spiritual rebirth.

Optina Monastery became the chief expression of this movement. Metropolitan Philaret was a living witness and participant of these events. The spiritual rebirth found in him support and sympathy. And this was one of his major services to the Church. But to understand this we must seek here the root of his personal holiness.

The Career of a Great Hierarch

Vassily Drosdov was born on December 26, 1782, the son of a deacon (later priest) in Kolomna, a suburb of Moscow. The boy studied at the Kolomna seminary under the difficult conditions of hunger and privation prevailing at the time. Instruction was conducted in Latin.

Frail and of small stature, Vassily stood out from among his companions by virtue of his talents. From the time of his first public sermon he was known as a brilliant preacher; Metropolitan Platon of Moscow, who took great interest in him, said of him, "I give sermons like a man, but he speaks like an angel."

In 1808, at the age of 26, while studying at the Moscow Theological Academy located at the Holy Trinity Lavra, Vassily was tonsured a monk and named Philaret in honor of St. Philaret the Almsgiver. Soon thereafter he was ordained deacon and in 1809 was sent to Petersburg to teach at the newly-reopened Theological Academy. After Moscow, spiritual mother to Russians and seat of the patriarchate, the young hierodeacon felt himself in Petersburg as if in the midst of Babylon, where there were no traditions at all. Nonetheless, as a professor Philaret was brilliant and inspired, attracting students to himself. He strove to make theology accessible to all. To this end he fought for permission to have courses taught in Russian rather than Latin, and through his persistence the change was made.

In 1817 he was consecrated bishop and was made first a vicar of the Petersburg diocese, then sent as archbishop in turn to Tver, Yaroslavl, and Moscow. He served in Moscow from 1821 until his death, being named Metropolitan in 1826 and serving in that capacity for 41 years.

As Metropolitan of the heart of Holy Russia, Moscow, Philaret was an indefatigable laborer on behalf of the Orthodox enlightenment of the Russian people. It was largely through his insistence and with his personal participation that the Holy Scriptures were first published in a Russian translation during the reign of Alexander II. Just as, in the age of pagan persecution of Christianity, and later in the age of the early heresies, various Teachers and Fathers of the Church and then the Ecumenical Councils worked out and established all the articles of the Church's belief, so too Philaret, in a century of such powerful and various attacks on the Church, expressed in his innumerable works the truths of Orthodoxy in their fullness, and gave to Russia present and future a complete digest of "how to believe," based on the age-old experience of the Church's life and on the works of the whole host of Teachers of the Church. The *Catechism* which he wrote and published in 1823 has been since then the standard for the Russian Church. He spent much time on the seminaries and theological schools, being an especially energetic worker and inspirer of the Moscow Theological Academy, which was then at the zenith of its glory.

The Metropolitan's capacity for work was phenomenal. Not only did he examine and decide all matters relating to the diocese of Moscow, he was sent also for examination and decision all the intricate matters awaiting decision by the Holy Synod. After the death of the Metropolitan, in the years 1885-87, there were published under the title *Opinions and Declarations of Metropolitan Philaret* eight volumes containing over one thousand opinions of the Metropolitan on questions of Church and State. The proclamation of Alexander II in 1861 freeing the serfs was edited by Metropolitan Philaret, who was especially respected by that Tsar.

Under Metropolitan Philaret the Church regained something of the independence from the State that had been lost with the abolition of the patriarchate by Peter I; Emperor and Metropolitan became more what Tsar and Patriarch had once been: the double heads of Holy Russia, exercising authority, the one over the secular, the other over the sacred, realm. Metropolitan Philaret was near to being the factual head of the Church, and with him one had to speak concerning everything of importance in the Church sphere. The Metropolitan himself regarded the relationship between Church and State in this fashion: The Emperor in an Orthodox government is the Anointed of God, who receives the fullness of his legitimacy from and through the Church. The governmental power itself can be neither the source nor the organ of Church legislation and administration. With the precision characteristic of him, Metropolitan Philaret always drew a firm line between the realms of Church and State and underlined the complete heterogeneity and separateness of the two; "unity and harmony" should be realized between them in the unity of a creative accomplishment of the commandments of God.

Metropolitan Philaret thought also of the restoration of the living unity of the local episcopate, to be realized through a constant consultative contact among the bishops, strengthened by means of meetings and councils. The reforms of Peter I had been destrnctive here, too, of normal Church life.

Such views, to be sure, were not at all shared by those active in the government at that time. Metropolitan Philaret fought against extreme difficulties, experiencing both hidden and open attacks from his enemies. Nonetheless, he firmly pursued his views into practice, and he died with them in large measure fulfilled.

Concerning the theology of Metropolitan Philaret, Father George Florovsky says: "The theme of his theology is always the Testament of God and men in all the complexity and variety of its historical destiny. Under whatever influences and impressions the 'system' of Philaret was formed, by its inner nature it belongs to the type of the Holy Fathers (compare in particular St. Gregory of Nyssa)... With special attention Philaret stopped always on two themes. These were, first, the mystery of the Cross, of the Redemption, and, second, a description of the life of grace, life in the Spirit, that is opened to believers in Christ... Christ is, for Philaret, above all the mystical High Priest, offering and being offered, -- the Lamb of God and Great Hierarch (compare the Epistle to the Hebrews). In the Gospel he sees above all the Cross on Golgotha; in the God-man, the suffering Saviour. 'The fate of the world hangs on His Cross; the life of the world lies in His grave. This Cross illumines the tearful land of this life; from His grave rises the sun of blessed immortality.' And the mystery of the Cross is the mystery of Divine love: 'Thus in the spiritual domain of the mysteries, by all measurement of the Cross of Christ, contemplation loses itself in the limitlessness of Christ's Cross...'

"In his sermons, especially on days commemorating the Passion, Philaret rises to genuine heights of prayerful lyricism; in his words can be heard the trembling of the heart.... In Philaret we find no coherent system; he speaks always rather 'on the occasion of --.' But in him we find something greater -- a unity of living experience, a depth of mental contemplation, a 'mysterious visitation of the Spirit.' And in this lies the key or explanation of his theological influence." (*Paths of Russian Theology*, in Russian, Paris, 1937, pp. 181-2.)

His Inward Spiritual Life

The inner life of Metropolitan Philaret proceeded under cover of such great secrecy that one may grasp its features only with difficulty, in order to judge by them concerning his inner asceticism. Here are his own words: *The battle and the distractions which affairs furnish us should not prevent us from withdrawing into our inner cell and praying in secret to the Father. True, the affairs of the external world unsettle us, pursue us, and he who enters his cell insufficiently closes the door after himself. But do Thou Who saidst, 'I am the door,' grant us to enter within and close the door after ourselves.* These words, written in a letter to his Starets, refer to the unceasing Jesus Prayer, but in general the private life of the Metropolitan was

exceedingly concealed; he opened his real self to no one, save his Starets, Archimandrite Anthony Medvedev, a remarkable man whose own Starets was St. Seraphim of Sarov.

The turning point in the spiritual life of Metropolitan Philaret was his first encounter with Fr. Anthony, then abbot of a poor hermitage who came to him to pay a visit to his ruling bishop. Fr. Anthony was quite outspoken in condemning the unorthodox and harmful "mysticism" propagated by the masonic Bible Society, which was in vogue during the reign of Alexander I. Metropolitan Philaret hoped to have the Bible translated for the first time into modern Russian and thus supported the Society without really being able to see the danger in its ideas. At this meeting he heard for the first time the Orthodox Patristic teaching of the *inward activity* (Jesus Prayer) and, probably, about Saint Seraphim. He was deeply impressed, and as soon as he could he placed Anthony as head of the Holy Trinity Lavra, which was in his diocese. After this a great spiritual friendship developed between him and Fr. Anthony, who became his Starets, and without his advice he made no important decision, whether concerning a diocesan matter, governmental affairs, or his personal spiritual life.

Fr. Anthony had been absolutely devoted to St. Seraphim from the time he entered monastic life at Sarov at a young age. Contact with the Saint revealed to him the realm of Orthodox spirituality and the path to acquire it. St. Seraphim foresaw that he would become "abbot of a great Lavra" and instructed him how to meet the challenge.

Metropolitan Philaret went through the way of the *inward activity*, the prayer of the heart, under the guidance of St. Seraphim's disciple, and he thereby acquired great gifts in the spiritual life: gifts of vision, of prophecy, of healing the afflicted. Thus he himself became one of the forces of the great spiritual revival in Russia. He saved the institution of Startsi in Optina Monastery when Starets Lev was persecuted, protected the nuns of St. Seraphim's Diveyevo Convent, patronized Starets Makary's publication of Paissy Velichkovsky's translations, founded the Gethsemene Skete of cave-dwellers near the Lavra. He himself functioned as a Starets. There is a clear indication also that he foresaw the Russian Revolution.[1]

The following incident, which he related to his Starets, sheds some light on the height of his spiritual perfection. In Moscow the newly erected Triumphal Gate was to be dedicated by the Metropolitan, for which occasion Emperor Nicholas I himself was to come. Since there were

1. See *The Orthodox Word*, vol. 1, no. 5, pp. 172-3.

statues of pagan gods on it, Metropolitan Philaret refused to consecrate it. The Tsar was greatly angered, and society disapproved of his action. Although he had obeyed his pastoral conscience and Fr. Anthony, he was not at peace over this and prayed fervently all night. "I fell asleep," he said, "and it was already close to five when I heard a noise at the door. I awoke and sat up. The door, which I usually lock, opened quietly and in walked St. Sergy, a thin, gray-haired old man of medium height, in his monk's habit and without epitrachelion. Bending over the bed, he said to me: 'Do not be upset, all will pass'... And he disappeared." St. Sergy of Radonezh, under whose protection the Metropolitan lived all his life, had personally come from another world to console the sorrowing heart of his servant.

Two months before the Metropolitan's death, his long-dead father appeared to him and said, "beware the 19th"; and he began to prepare for his death. On November 19 he served Divine Liturgy with exceptional feeling and tears. At two in the afternoon he was found dead in his cell. His righteous death, as also his life, was concealed from men.

Literally the whole of Moscow participated in the burial of the great hierarch, hundreds of thousands of people accompanying him to his final resting place in the Holy Trinity Lavra of St. Sergy.

Orthodox Russians venerate Metropolitan Philaret as a man of prayer. Still during his lifetime many people asked his prayers and blessing for the sick, and there were cases of healing from his prayers. One eight-year old paralyzed girl began at once to walk as soon as her mother carried her to receive a blessing from the Metropolitan. A girl who had been dumb for thirteen years began to talk when Metropolitan Philaret asked her, "What is your name?" and forced her on the spot to read the Lord's Prayer. One merchant had gangrene on his arm and the doctors decided to amputate it, bnt the sick man through his parish priest asked with faith for the prayers of Metropolitan Philaret, and after this he saw a dream in which the Metropolitan blessed him; when he awoke he felt better, and when the doctors came for the operation they found, to their astonishment, that the arm was normal and no surgery was necessary... And there have been many more cases of his intercession.

Metropolitan Philaret is indeed a glorious member of the heaven over Holy Russia, a saint and an intercessor for all Orthodox believers. May Christ our Lord, in the severe trials that await true Christians, give strength and wisdom through the prayers of His servant, the Blessed Metropolitan of Moscow.

STS. STAMATIOS AND JOHN

THE BROTHERS, AND NICHOLAS, THEIR FELLOW ATHLETE, MARTYRED IN CHIOS IN 1822 (FEBRUARY 3)

O, the goodly courage of the brothers!
They hasten both, each to be the first beheaded!
As crown-bearing martyrs do ye soar into the Heavens!
The trophy of victory didst thou carry off,
having contested well
With longing for the Lord, O all-blessed Nicholas!

HOW *WONDROUS ARE THY WORKS, O LORD, and how unsearchable Thy ways,* are we able to cry with every righteous one in wonder, for the mind of man cannot contain, nor can the intellect discern, nor can the tongue speak of the ways in which the All-wise and All-good providence of God dispenses all things with loving care. One are the schemes of men, and another are the things which God commands. Saul sought to find the lost asses of his father, and Divine Providence ordained him King of Israel. David took food to his brothers on the field of battle, and the All-wise Providence chose him and showed him forth as a victor and trophy-bearer over the foreign bandit chief, Goliath. These holy martyrs came out of their country to conduct business, in order to gain temporary wealth, and the All-wise Providence through this manner called them to receive a great and unexpected profit.

How wonderful are Thy works, O Lord, and how unsearchable Thy ways!

They came out of their homeland for temporary profit and the perverseness of the weather brought them into the harbor of martyrs' struggles and shows them forth as crown-bearers and victory-bearing martyrs. But that everyone may understand the subject of their martyrdom and how it took place, let us recount it in brief.

These newly appeared Martyrs of Christ, the shining luminaries of the Church, were born in the island of Spetsai. Their father was named Theodore Gines, and their mother's name was Anezo. When their father died, they were only of moderate means, thus they were reared together with their other brothers. When they had come of age, they worked as merchants in small trade according to the custom of the inhabitants. In the year 1822, in which earth and sea were shaken by the revolution that took place against the impious and unlawful Ottoman tyrants, they came out of their country to do business. Travelling in their ship which was filled with oil, they were driven by contrariness of winds and a sea storm and came out on the shore opposite the island of Chios near that part of Anatolia which is called Tsesme, in the parts called Alatsata. Having anchored, they came out on dry land and revealed themselves to a certain Christian, whom they considered to be truly Christian. They told him who they were and begged him to provide them with whatever they needed to repair their small boat, giving him sufficient money, also. He, however, instead of providing them as he had promised, showed himself to be another Judas. He went to the Agha of that place and betrayed them, taking some of the Agha's men to the place where they were to capture them. Altogether, the men on the boat were seven. Two of these were killed while attempting to escape, and another two fell into the sea. As for the remaining three, the captain and these two brothers, they captured them and brought them to Chios to surrender them to the Pasha who was there. It was then the 26th of January. The Pasha had them brought before him, and examined them. When he had learned who they were, he ordered that they close the two brothers in a dark prison. As for the elderly Nicholas, he ordered that they take him out of the fortress to the plain which is called Vounaki and behead him. Along the entire way, they urged him to become a Moslem, saying they would then grant him his life. But he answered, "Now I am going to start a new life? No. I was born a Christian, and a Christian shall I die. I will not deny my Faith." When they had reached the appointed place, they beheaded him in confession of the Orthodox Faith.

While the young men were imprisoned in the dark dungeon of the fortress, the Pasha summoned two of his men -- one was a Chiote officer named Serif, and the other a man from Lazos, of high army rank -- both of whom were most evil and wicked, and promised them great gifts and presents if they could convince the brothers to become Moslem, either by threats of torture or promises of gifts. The accursed one, therefore,

had great longing to make them become Moslem, considering this to be to his advantage and a great honor to him. As those that were present heard him say: "It behooves us to have such men as them in our faith." When these two had received this command from the Pasha, what did they not do, what did they not devise? The accursed ones did not cease, every hour and moment, turning every stone, as the saying goes, either with promises of great gifts and rank or by threats of torments and punishments. Yet the brothers remained steadfast and immovable, and would reply against them with great boldness.

When five days had passed, and they were not able at all to shake them from their steadfast faith, both went to the Pasha and told him, "Affendi (Master), they trust that we will not torture them, and because of this they hold well to their stubbornness. Therefore, give us permission to inflict torments upon them and in this manner we may be able to persuade them, for now they resist us and speak back to us with great boldness." The Pasha, when he heard these things, stood for a time considering, and then told them, "These unbelievers have this habit, and once they become set in their stubbornness it is impossible for anyone to change them. It is easier to cut off their head than their stubbornness." He said these things to the Aghas who were present (which also Hadgi Polykronos, one of the notable men of that area, heard from the very mouth of the Pasha). And he said furthermore, "Tomorrow this matter shall come to an end."

As for the good young men, who were enclosed in the prison, they knew by Divine revelation, without anyone having told them, that the next day they would finish the good fight. And rejoicing, they said to their fellow-prisoners, "Tomorrow, brothers, we finish life. Tomorrow is the last day of our life." Wherefore, they asked that they might be brought paper secretly, and they sent their written confession to the holy Metropolitan of Chios, asking also that he might find a way to deem them worthy of receiving the immaculate Mysteries. Since no one else could enter the prison, the bishop sent a message to them through a woman who worked in the prison, telling them to remain steadfast and prepare themselves with prayers and tears and not to fear death at all, because the glory of paradise awaited them that they might rejoice with the Martyrs eternally. He also told the woman to go at dawn to give them the immaculate Mysteries, since it was not possible for a priest or another Christian to enter into the prison.

NEW MARTYR-SAINTS STAMATIOS, NICHOLAS, AND JOHN

Troparion to the Martyrs, Tone 4

THY MARTYRS, O LORD,
IN THEIR SUFFERINGS HAVE RECEIVED FROM
THEE, OUR GOD, INCORRUPTIBLE CROWNS;
FOR, POSSESSING THY FIRMNESS,
THEY OVERTHREW THE TORTURERS AND SHATTERED
THE DEMON'S POWERLESS INSOLENCE.
BY THEIR PRAYERS SAVE OUR SOULS.

When they heard these instructions and admonitions of the bishop from the mouth of the woman, the youths thanked the Lord with tears and passed the whole night in vigil, chanting canons to the Theotokos as well as Her Akathist and other prayers, as many as they knew. They prayed and made supplication unto the Lady Theotokos that She might intercede with Her Son to grant them strength that they might not fear death.

At about dawn they fell asleep a little, and when they woke up they said to the other Christians, "Today, brothers, we finish the journey of our life. Wherefore, we beseech you that you also make supplication unto our Lord to grant us strength." Then they gave what extra clothing they had to the imprisoned Christians, and also they gave some silver coins which they had. When day came, the bishop sent them the immaculate Mysteries by the woman mentioned before, and they received them with tears. When they had partaken of the immaculate Mysteries, they thanked the Lord greatly, and after a short while they ate a little food. Again, by the same woman they sent their thanks to the bishop for having provided them with this necessity, and they sent him also some money, entreating him also to pray over their remains and to commemorate them when they had reposed.

After the passage of two hours, the Pasha gave command that they take them out of the prison and bring them, with their hands tied behind their backs, below his mansion, where he was sitting, and ask them if they wanted to become Moslem to save their life or, if not, their heads would be cut off. Immediately the command was carried out and they were brought. The executioner began telling them to obey and become Moslem that they might save their life and be also deemed worthy of great honor. But the blessed ones cried out with a great voice saying, "We shall die Christians! We are Christians; we were born Christians; and we shall die Christians. We shall not deny Christ even if you cut us into pieces. Only do what you are going to do one hour sooner and do not waste your time. We shall never deny our Faith." The Pasha himself heard these things from his window where he was sitting, since the two shouted these things with a great voice. Wherefore he gave decision that they behead them.

Immediately these bloodthirsty wolves seized them and dragged them outside the fortress with great disturbance, waving two naked swords before their eyes to frighten them. Seeing their great mania, the onlookers trembled. This also made one of the two, John, cowardly for a time, and his countenance changed. When Stamatios saw this he said

to him, "What has happened to you, brother? Have you become frightened of the dogs? Do you not remember the decision which we made that we would not betray our Faith? How do you now appear cowardly? Plead with the All-holy One that She grant you strength." These words gave courage to John. While they were going out to the plain outside the fortress, which is called Vounaki, a great multitude hastened before and behind them. As for the blessed ones, they cried out with a great voice, "We are Christians! We go to death for the sake of Christ!"

When they reached the place which is opposite where they slaughtered animals, below the old Fountain, they stopped them and asked if they would repent and become Moslems, otherwise they would cut them down, and at the same time they showed them the swords. Then with a great voice both of them cried out, "Brother Christians, we are Christians and we die for Christ!" In fact, they said it three times, "We are Christians! Christians! Christians! We do not change our Faith! Remember us, O Lord, in Thy Kingdom." Then immediately they beheaded them, and the blessed ones received the crowns of contest and arose as crown-bearers into the heavens to rejoice eternally with the athletes and Martyrs of God.

As for their venerable relics, they remained scorned in the place of condemnation. Between the two they placed a paper stating the reason for their beheading – that they were against the king, and thieves. After three days, they forced some Christians to drag them and place them in a skiff from which they cast them into the sea. Several martyr-loving Christians took care and sought to drag them out, but because of their great fear they did as follows. They gave notice to one Christ-loving and martyr-loving Christian, a tanner named George, to watch the sea, where he always was because of his work. The good George, therefore, took care and attended to this. After four days a strong south wind blew and brought out the venerable relics at the place of Lanaritis. The Christians took and buried them secretly in a field. The head of John they did not find, but only that of Stamatios.

This is the martyrdom, O brothers, of the New Martyrs Stamatios and John the good brothers, as we were able to learn with much care from truth-loving men without any addition. Thus did the gloriously victorious young men struggle. Thus did they withstand to the very end, keeping the treasury of godly faith, and for the Faith were their heads cut off. In age, they say, Stamatios was eighteen and John was twenty-two. By their intercessions may we also be deemed worthy to keep the Faith spotless to the end, accompanied by God-pleasing works, that we also may attain to the Kingdom of Heaven. Amen.

A PILGRIMAGE TO THE ORTHODOX HOLY PLACES OF AMERICA

THE NINTH PILGRIMAGE

TO CANADA Holy Orthodoxy came with the flow of immigration at the end of the last century. To the native Canadians, Anglicans, Holy Orthodoxy was simply one other phase of Christianity and never produced any interest. Actually Canada never had its Orthodox *Sts. Cyril and Methody*. The first settlers were poor homesteaders, totally engrossed in providing their livelihood by turning the vast forest area into tillable land. The Orthodox pastors were few and faced merciless conditions due to the severe winter climate, lack of roads and means of transportation, poverty, deprivation, even slander and mockery; after the Russian Revolution, when contact was broken with Holy Russia, a sense of absolute abandonment prevailed among the lonely pastors. The constantly-traveling priest, in his pastoral care of the "children of his own flock," never mind his mission to native Canadians, felt lost in the cold vastness of the Canadian "desert."

One of such pastors who, as the Church sings in glorifying monk-Saints, "by means of tears tilled the desert," and by starting Sketes, holy places, himself acquired considerable sanctity -- was Archbishop Ioasaph.

Orthodoxy in Canada is still very young to produce spiritual fruits of its own. But it definitely has been given genuine shoots of Holy Orthodoxy to nurture, out of which to bring a spiritual crop. The future, if there is to be one, should show the spiritual worth of Canadian soil.

Let us, then, make a spiritual pilgrimage to one of the snowbound Canadian Sketes...

HOLY PROTECTION SKETE

NEAR BLUFFTON, ALBERTA

Today, right-believing people, let us radiantly feast,
Overshadowed by Thy coming, O Mother of God,
And beholding Thy most pure image,
Let us say with tender feeling:
Cover us with Thy honorable Protection,
And save us from every evil,
Thou Who prayest to Thy Son, Christ our God, to save our souls.

Holy Protection Troparion, Tone 4

IN THE CENTRAL PART of the Province of Alberta, Canada, about halfway between two of its largest cities, Edmonton and Calgary, is an area where one settlement after another is adorned with majestic Orthodox churches with large gilded domes, and a multitude of onion-shaped cupolas, and glittering eight-pointed Russian crosses. This vast area, once sanctified by Orthodox confession, is now quite lax and disunified in spirit. Holy Orthodoxy there, to say the least, does not "move mountains." Nonetheless, there is one spot in this area, namely ten miles south of the town of Bluffton, where just a handful of women carry on their fragile shoulders a true *podvig*, a great and active work of Orthodox enlightenment just by living an exemplary life of traditional Orthodox monasticism. Although forlorn in the vast Canadian spaciousness, and surrounded by desolate forest areas, where wild animals frequently wander in from the prairie just north, this little community conducts a vigorous and righteous activity that shines on the background of today's dark times like a guiding star -- showing the way from the darkness of contemporary apostasy to Christ's Kingdom of Glory.

The Skete church with bell tower and graveyard.

On the Skete's feast day a religious procession goes around the church as a nun accompanies with bell-ringing.

Abbess Ariadna holding the Miraculous Icon of the Vladimir Mother of God, surrounded by the sisters, including two skhema-nuns

ONE OF the brightest lamps of Orthodoxy in Canada was Archbishop Ioasaph Skorodumoff, who with his zealous missionary Archimandrite, Amvrossy Konovalov, introduced to the cold Canadian atmosphere the living spark of monasticism. The bishop was the spiritual son of the saintly Bishop Theophan of Paltava, and Father Amvrossy, as a *wanderer* (strannik), pilgrimaged to many holy places in Imperial Russia, coming at last to Optina, where Starets Anatoly (the Younger) became his elder. A brief account of Vladka Ioasaph's life will be presented in due time in *The Orthodox Word*. From his youth he involved himself in the spiritual life and monasticism, and when in Canada he built three sketes, literally with his own hands. Although Vladika put great labor into these monastic enterprises, no skete in the original sense of the word has come down to us from him. There are three types of monastic life: the hermitic, the communal, and the third type--life in a skete, where two or three brothers live together in unity of heart. The skete-life is praised by the Holy Fathers as the golden, the royal path.

HOLY PROTECTION SKETE

WHILE VISITING his vast diocese, Vladika Ioasaph stopped once in a region near Bluffton, 85 miles south of Edmonton, where 10 or 12 Russian families then lived on farms. From his very first visit a strong desire came upon him to found a skete for men there; and he realized this desire, with the help of these settlers, in 1934-35. Mr. Michaelov sold the bishop a piece of land and a log house for the skete, and there at first lived Br. Platon Kustov with a few other brothers, and services were held either by Vladika himself, whenever he could come to the skete, or by other members of his clergy, who were mostly monks. Hieromonk Elias Gavriliak was the first monk-priest to stay permanently at the skete, but the spiritual head was Vladika himself.

The little church was built and consecrated in the name of the Protection of the Holy Virgin in 1937. A year before that a little log cabin was built, now located next to the church, and it was there that Vladika performed his podvig of long prayer when staying, due to bad weather and impassable roads, for weeks on end in freezing cold and desolation. He loved the Skete dearly, but neither his wish for seclusion nor normal skete-life were ever realized.

When Abbess Rufina[1] was still alive, Vladika wrote to her requesting her to move her convent from Shanghai to Canada, in order to begin Orthodox monastic life in Canada. This wish was later realized, and the skete, now a convent, exists as a living monument to Canada's great bishop.

In 1949 the Convent of the Vladimir Mother of God was moved to San Francisco, where Abbess Ariadna with her nuns met Vladika Ioasaph; to her he repeated his request. Mother Amvrossia,[2] whose ill health required a change of climate, went together with two other sisters as an obedience, to the Skete which Vladika offered them. The settlement of the nuns in Canada had a providential significance, which became evident when several old and ailing nuns, who had been denied entrance into the United States, were allowed to come to Canada, provided they would be taken care of. Now the nuns would be saved from the horrible unmonastic living conditions of a Philippine refugee camp, and could come to an affiliate of their mother convent.

The nuns, of course, underwent many trials in the new convent, especially after the departure of Vladika Ioasaph for Argentina, but Metropolitan Anastassy took the Convent under his own protection and

1. See *The Orthodox Word*, vol. 3, no. 4, p. 143.
2. *Ibid*, opp. p 148.

sent Father I. Anosoff as the Convent priest. Aftter the latter's death, for many years an Athonite Skhema-Archimandrite, Makary Kozubinsky, was the Convent's father confessor. In recent years the Convent's priest has been Fr. Alexander Mishukoff, a devout benefactor of the Skete from its very beginning. The services are conducted daily in the church and the monastic rule in the house-chapel over the trapeza. Besides the regular fasts, the nuns fast also on Mondays, in accordance with the ancient monastic rule. The Skete has now 400 acres of land, mostly forested; a small dairy farm with 10 cows is maintained and there are chickens. The hard work in the fields and the preparation of firewood for the whole long winter is done by the six nuns themselves.

THE SPIRITUAL AND MANUAL labor that has been put into the building of the Skete has been great indeed. Every step is, as it were, saturated with *podvig*. Indeed, the spiritual atmosphere in the New World is so totally foreign to living Orthodox tradition that it takes immense *podvig* to retain some measure of a genuine spiritual life. Our times have deprived us of anchorite spiritual leaders; nowadays there are no *startsi* that link back to the experience nurtured on the age-old monastic tradition. Monasticism in America existed so far at the cost of hard spiritual and manly labor. *And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven is gotten by force, and the violent take it by force* (Matth. 11:12). *Come to Me all ye that labor and are heavy-laden*, calls Christ our Lord, *and I shall give you rest*, He promises. And indeed Christ is near in the Holy Protection Skete.

Before departure on such an important mission, Mother Amvrossia was blessed by Abbess Ariadna with a renewed icon of St. Arseny of Konevits, a 15th-century Russian Saint who left his Novgorod monastery for Mount Athos only to return to Russia and found the Konevits Monastery on Lake Ladoga. He brought with him to Russia a blessing of his Athonite Abbot -- a miraculous icon of the Mother of God (the Konevits Icon), which gave him encouragement, strength, and spiritual wisdom to do God's work when he felt despondent. Likewise, Mother Amvrossia has a blessing of her Abbess -- a miraculously-renewed icon of the Mother of God, *The Milkgiver*, as a consolation in her trials. This Icon is perhaps the holiest object in all of Canada.

Today, as the world rapidly progresses in its deviation from life according to God's commandments, and God's likeness in men decreases, the Holy Protection Skete is indeed like the Gospel pearl of inestimable price...

Next issue: A Pilgrimage to Dormition Monastery in Alberta, Canada.

Mother Cleopatra performing chores in a clearing at the edge of the Convent settlement

FOR THE ORTHODOX MISSION
TO THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD

THE ORTHODOX WORD

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The Orthodox Word is a continuing collection of basic, living Orthodox material. New subscribers may obtain other issues for 1967 at a cost of $2.00 for all four. Featured articles in these issues include:

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